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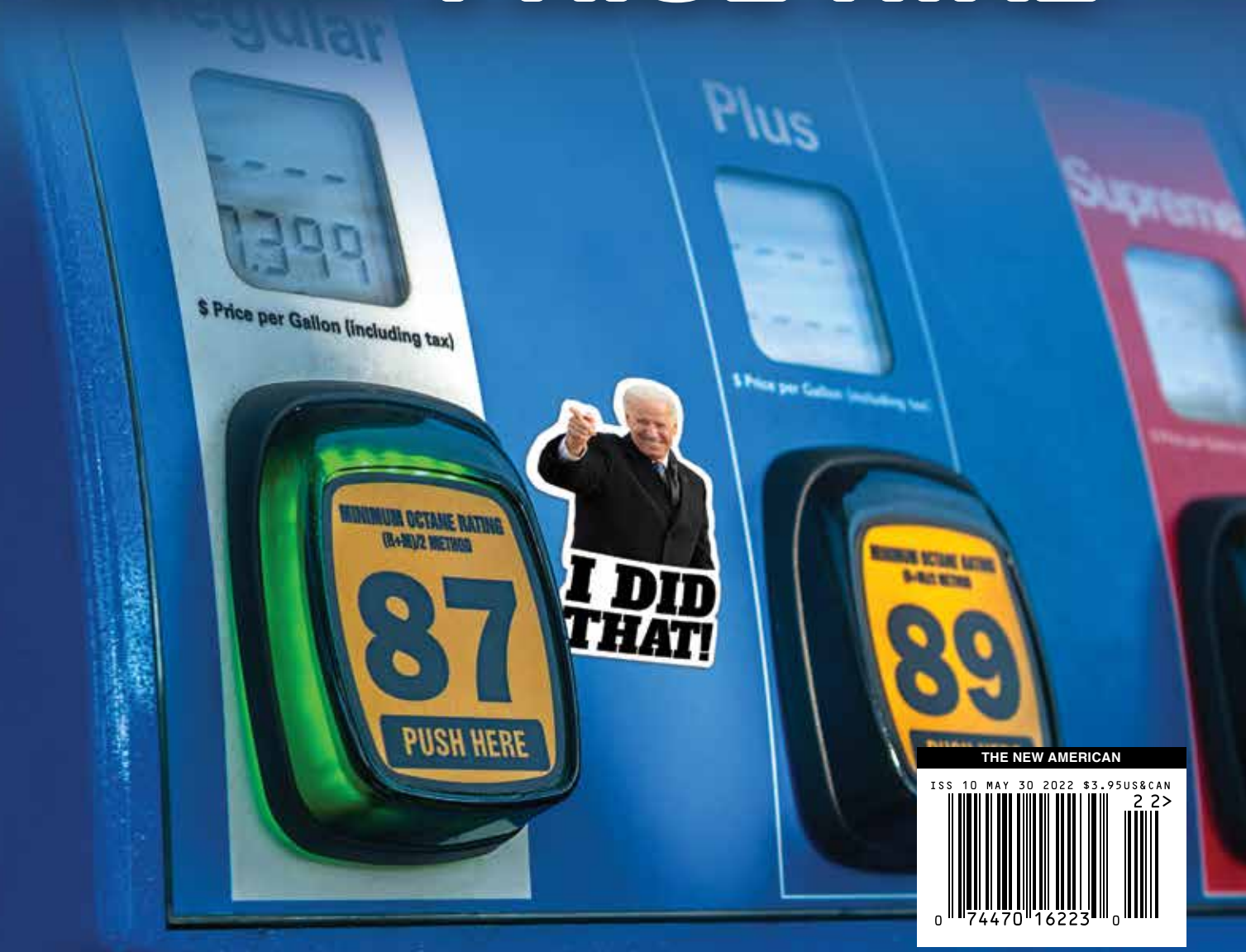

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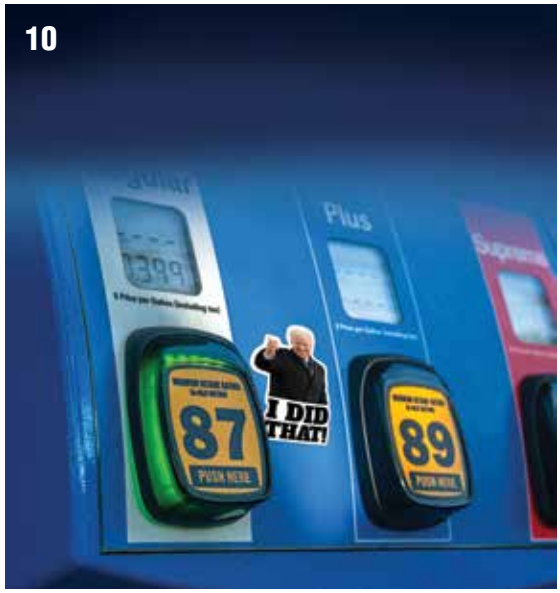

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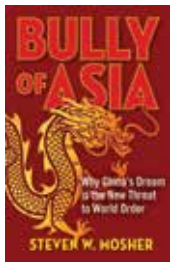

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Helping the "Stupid"

I remember whenever I acted stupid, life became harder. It can be a difficult process only cured by an aware maturity.

Realizing that, I understand that those who believe this government is doing a good job are just stupid. After all, we are all born stupid, but there is a silver lining: Stupid is curable by life's experiences for most, so all we have to do is cure those stupid people so they become aware of their environment, at which point they would have joined the majority. I always had a positive outlook on life, and every instinct I have tells me the majority is growing each day.

We can't help the ignorant, but we do have a responsibility to help the stupid. I don't mean this as an insult, but we are forced to deal with facts. That's why we must communicate with people. To help our Republic, we need to help them. I know it's difficult communicating with stupid people, but be nice, be patient — we need them to communicate.

We don't insult them; we need to speak with them. Asking questions is a safe way to communicate. Why is it that America is no longer energy independent? We know it's because government restricted our production, but what do they know? Why have we allowed more than two million people to cross our border and live in our country, and we don't know who they are, good or bad? The safe answer is our government has opened our border without processing them and has little information on people allowed in. Maybe it's too soon to talk about the possibility of them becoming Democratic voters.

Why do you think America has so much crime? We know it's because of the defund the police movement and radical leftist prosecutors, mayors, and governors. We also know it's not like that in red states, but what do they know?

When I say we need to communicate with people, it's not just "a saying," it's a "critical fact." People ask me, what can we do? The answer is always the same: communicate. The only way we preserve our way of life is to communicate about it. We have our constitutional protections, for the most part, and our Founders told us that God gave us our rights and they left us the avenues to preserve our way of life. All we need is for Americans to be aware of their environment. When that happens, the American spirit rises with the voice of the majority. So, let's do our duty as American patriots: Go and save a stupid person.

Strangely, most Americans didn't support the American Revolution, so you could say America was created by the minority that grew to the majority, who are now a part of the second American Revolution and who will not underestimate the elitist minority, and who will do what is necessary to preserve our way of life. Take care patriots.

Frank D. Lovell
Sent via email

A Man for All Seasons

Hal Shurtleff, of Alton, New Hampshire, is a man for all seasons, a man for all reasons.

The victory handed him by the recent unanimous decision of the Supreme Court in his suit against the city of Boston and its decision to deny him and others the right to fly their Christian banner was long overdue. The seasons came and went, rulings came against him. He persisted, the suit moved through the lower federal courts, and finally stood at the top, and he won.

So Hal is an example to all. This son of God went forth to war a kingly crown to gain.

Eugene M. Long, Jr., M.D.
Sent via email

In Memory of

Becky Akers

With great sadness we must report the passing of Becky Akers, a truly great American patriot. A steadfast friend of liberty and an immovable granite rampart against tyranny, Becky was also among the greatest writers of our age — or any other. For a time, her powerful and insightful articles and commentaries appeared at *The New American*, as they had among many other publications. We shall miss her immensely. As she is eternally in God's choir she will remain forever in our hearts.

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As Public-school Enrollments Drop, So Do School Budgets

Public schools are opening across the country, but many students aren't returning. And that, as the Associated Press reported April 30, is causing many public schools major budgetary difficulties.

In Houston, for example, 11,000 students haven't returned, forcing the district to cut $60 million from next year's budget. In Olathe, Kansas, 800 students haven't returned, forcing the district to cut 140 jobs. In Albuquerque, so many students are being homeschooled that the school district is facing a budget shortfall of $25 million. In Minneapolis, the school district has lost more than 4,000 students, resulting in a budget deficit of $27 million. In Lawrence, Kansas, school officials are being forced to deal with a $7 million shortfall, while in Des Moines, 1,600 students haven't returned, causing a $9 million deficit.

Strategies for dealing with these shortfalls range from laying off substitute teachers and aides, merging upper and lower age classes, cutting athletic and other budgets, and closing schools altogether. Some districts are even selling school buildings to raise revenue to cover the deficits.

The one exception is Florida. As Hot Air reported May 1, "School enrollment is actually up in the Sunshine State and school revenue has increased with it. Could that be because of the state's policies requiring schools to involve parents in decisions affecting their children? Could it be the fact that so many people fleeing failing cities in blue states are heading for Florida? It's probably a combination of both."

Although many districts are blaming Covid shutdowns, that is likely only a partial answer. As Keri Ingraham wrote May 29 for the *Washington Examiner*, "Parents were especially delighted to have their children escape the far-left political indoctrination that dominates today's K-12 public education classrooms (the daily promotion of the LGBT agenda, critical race theory divisiveness, and woke academics)."

In just one year, the percentage of students being homeschooled across the country jumped from three percent to nearly 12 percent. And as homeschooling becomes more widely recognized as viable and financially attractive, its growth is likely to continue apace.

fredrocko/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Report: Big Tech Changed Outcome of 2020 Election

An April 21 report from the Media Research Center (MRC) confirms what many have suspected — and anecdotal evidence has suggested — over the past two years: Big Tech has been placing its thumb on the political scales. Through its CensorTrack database, MRC found over 640 cases of Big Tech platforms intervening on Biden's behalf.

"Big Tech's campaign to protect President Joe Biden and his agenda has continued unabated," according to the report, which lists "more than 640 examples of bans, deleted content and other speech restrictions placed on those who criticized Biden on social media over the past two years."

BigNazik/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Of the 646 examples listed, many of those were "cases of Big Tech censoring people over the *New York Post's* bombshell Hunter Biden story in late 2020." In all, MRC found 140 cases of Big Tech silencing mentions of the *Post's* explosive story of Hunter Biden's corrupt dealings in Ukraine, as shown in data discovered on his abandoned laptop. While that story — breaking just weeks before the 2020 election — would almost certainly have put Biden in a deservedly bad light, Big Tech made sure that would not happen.

The lengths to which Big Tech went to sway the election by killing the laptop story is beyond the pale. Twitter even placed a "warning label" on the GOP House Judiciary Committee's website for linking to the laptop story.

The report continues, "But the largest category by far included users who dared to call out Biden's notoriously creepy, touchy-feely behavior around women and children. The 232 cases of comedic memes, videos, or generic posts about Biden's conduct composed more than one-third of CensorTrack's total instances of users censored for criticizing the president."

The report shows that fully "45 percent of Biden's voters weren't fully aware of the *Post* story precisely because the media and Big Tech tried to whitewash it." The result of the story being known "would have led 9.4 percent of Biden voters to abandon him, flipping all six of the swing states he won to Trump."

SCOTUS: Christian Flag May Fly in Boston

On May 2, the U.S. Supreme Court issued an important ruling protecting free speech.

The case, *Shurtleff v. City of Boston*, involved an appeal by Camp Constitution ("Camp"), a Christian group that, in 2017, applied to fly a flag with a Christian cross on it over City Hall in Boston. Camp was a volunteer association that sought "to enhance understanding of the country's Judeo-Christian moral heritage."

Camp's application was made in accordance with Boston's flag-raising program. As the Supreme Court noted in its opinion, "For years, Boston has allowed private groups to request use of the flagpole to raise flags of their choosing. As part of this program, Boston approved hundreds of requests to raise dozens of different flags. The city did not deny a single request to raise a flag until, in 2017, Harold Shurtleff, the director of a group called Camp Constitution, asked to fly a Christian flag. Boston refused. At that time, Boston admits, it had no written policy limiting use of the flagpole based on the content of a flag."

Notwithstanding, Camp's request was denied in accordance with Boston's policy to "refrain respectfully from flying non-secular third-party flags in accordance with the First Amendment's prohibition of government establishment of religion." The District Court for the District of Massachusetts ultimately ruled in Boston's favor, and the First Circuit affirmed. The Supreme Court disagreed and reversed the First Circuit's decision.

The Court noted that Boston previously permitted many different types of flags in accordance with its flag-raising policy, some of which had nothing to do with Boston whatsoever. The Court also made additional findings that reflected how little control Boston had over the flags and/or their messages.

In accordance with these findings, the Court determined that Boston's flag-raising program did not constitute government speech. As a result, Boston could not exclude speech based on religious viewpoint, as doing so would constitute impermissible viewpoint discrimination.

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Leaked SCOTUS Draft: *Roe v. Wade* Will Be Overturned

A reported draft of the majority opinion in a Mississippi abortion case, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, suggests the U.S. Supreme Court will vote to strike down *Roe v. Wade*. The text of the draft was published by *Politico* on May 2.

The majority opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito, reads, "We hold that *Roe* and *Casey* must be overruled. The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of *Roe* and *Casey* now chiefly rely — the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment…. *Roe* was egregiously wrong from the start…. Its reasoning was exceptionally weak, and the decision has had damaging consequences."

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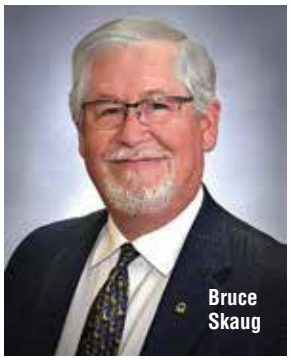
According to *Politico*, Republican-appointed Justices Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett voted with Alito after hearing oral arguments this past December. "Progressive" Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan are reportedly working on one or more dissents. It is unclear how Chief Justice John Roberts will vote.

Roberts issued a May 3 statement confirming the draft's authenticity but noted that it does not represent the court's final opinion. He ordered an investigation into the source of the leak, calling it a "singular and egregious breach" of trust and a betrayal of confidence "intended to undermine the integrity of our operations."

Harvard Law professor emeritus Alan Dershowitz told Fox News' Sean Hannity May 3, "I think this was leaked by a liberal law clerk who was trying to change the outcome of the case, either by putting pressure on some of the justices to change their mind, or by getting Congress to pack the court even before June, which is very unlikely, or to get Congress to pass a national right-to-abortion law," he opined.

Anticipating a decision overturning or gutting *Roe*, at least 12 states have already enacted so-called trigger bans that would instantly prohibit abortion. SCOTUS is expected to rule on the case in late June or early July. ■

Idaho Lawmaker Makes Excellent Sense


Bruce Skaug

Idaho.gov

"If we do not allow minors to get tattoos, smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, and sign legal contracts, why should we allow them to make decisions to cut away organs based on their feelings during puberty time."
Idaho State Representative **Bruce Skaug** *authored legislation to penalize parents who seek gender-switching procedures for their own children. His measure was readily approved by the Idaho House of Representatives.*

President's Release of One Million Barrels of Oil for Six Months Will Have Little Effect

"It will lower the oil price a little and encourage more demand. But it is still a Band-Aid on a significant shortfall of supply."
According to **Scott Sheffield**, *chief executive of Texas-based Pioneer Natural Resources, using oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve will have little effect on the recent price increases Americans are paying at the pumps. Instead, the Biden-imposed restrictions on production of domestic oil and gas should be cancelled.*

Britain Withdraws Hong Kong Judges as Beijing's Control Tightens

"I have concluded, in agreement with the government, that the [British] judges of the Supreme Court cannot continue to sit in Hong Kong without appearing to endorse an administration which has departed from values of political freedom and freedom of expression."
As the Chinese Communist Party's rule over Hong Kong approaches total domination, Britain's Supreme Court president **Robert Reed** *decided in sadness that cooperation with the Beijing government has become impossible. He withdrew the remaining jurists from what was until recently an island of freedom in China.*

Donald Trump

Gage Skidmore

Former President Attacks Democrats for "Waging War on Reality"

"With their extremist sex and gender ideology, the Democrat Party is waging war on reality, war on science, war on children, war on women. Who the hell would have ever believed that we'd be talking about this stuff?"
During an April 2 rally in Michigan, Republican **Donald Trump** *sharply criticized Democrats for promoting the transgender wave surfacing throughout the nation.*

Teachers Promoting Transgenderism Create Closets With Clothes Children Can Use While in School

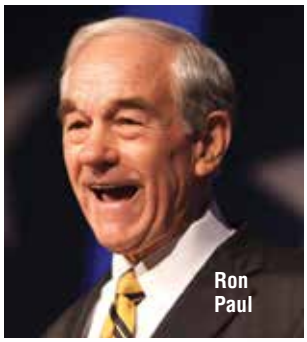
"We do provide a safe space for kids whose parents are not accepting, because it's known to help lower the suicide rate."
The founder of the Transition Closet, **Amare Roush**, *told* The Epoch Times *that her organization supports keeping the existence of school trans closets secret from parents.*

Wind Energy Firm Fined After Its Turbines Killed Eagles

"ESI Energy Company pleaded guilty to violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act during a court appearance in Cheyenne, Wyoming."
According to a report published by **Associated Press**, *the court sentenced the company to probation and ordered it to pay more than $8 million in fines. ESI's wind farms are located in eight states, where the turbines have killed at least 150 eagles.*

Former Congressman Says the United States Is at War, but It's a War Against Ever-larger Government

"The war we face today is not against foreign enemies, but rather on American soil against our own government officials as they seek more and more power, and as they suck out the vitality of our citizens."
Veteran Texas Congressman **Ron Paul**, *now retired, spent many years telling anyone who would listen that federal officials were destroying the American dream.* ■


Ron Paul

Gage Skidmore

— Compiled by John F. McManus

BIDEN'S PRICE HIKE

Biden must share blame with Congress and the Federal Reserve for the policies fueling rapidly rising prices from the gas pump to the grocery store. But his finger-pointing at Putin and Trump is clearly intended to deflect blame.

by Charles Scaliger

By now, the tens of millions of supporters of Joe Biden have had plenty of time for buyer's remorse. Little more than a year after Biden's inauguration, the American economy is in dizzying freefall, with the most visible effect being skyrocketing consumer-price inflation on a scale not seen in more than 40 years. With gasoline at its highest price levels ever, Americans are losing their traditional mobility. It now costs a small fortune to fill a car tank, let alone fuel up an 18-wheeler, and airline ticket prices have already gone up by more than 36 percent since the beginning of the year. Moreover, prices at the supermarket have soared to heights unseen since the Carter administration.

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. Against the backdrop of international crisis that could spiral into world war over Ukraine or the South China Sea, America's gargantuan national debt continues to soar, undermining confidence in the dollar abroad and threatening our national solvency. Yet President Biden has just introduced a budget request featuring massive spending increases as well as the largest tax hike in American history. In particular, a massive tax on so-called unrealized benefits for wealthy shareholders would for the first time involve taxing gains in the value of assets that have not actually been liquidated or "realized." Simply put, it means that if the value of a stock, bond, or other asset held by an investor increases in value, the government will be able to tax that increase even if the asset is not sold off and profits pocketed. This exotic new tax would only apply to a very small group of America's wealthiest (at least, at first), and would be levied in order to ensure that all billionaires pay at least a 20-percent income-tax rate — the "Billionaire Minimum Income Tax."

The new tax proposal, which echoes unsuccessful attempts by the Biden administration to hike taxes last year, is being applauded by all the usual self-satisfied purveyors of class envy. Such destructive policies always find supporters among class-warfare fifth columnists. But the larger question is, how have the American economy and the American body politic come to such a disastrous pass? And where are such horrendously destructive policies likely to lead if America's clueless and even malign leadership does not soon change direction?

Charles Scaliger, a longtime contributor to The New American *and former academic at an American university, now lives and works in East Asia.*

How have the American economy and the American body politic come to such a disastrous pass? And where are such horrendously destructive policies likely to lead if America's clueless and even malign leadership does not soon change direction?

AP Images

Milking consumers: As food prices continue to soar, items such as dairy products are being priced out of many food budgets.

Feeling the Pinch

Joe Biden and his Democratic brethren swept into power in a time of unexampled social and economic crisis, highlighted by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and exacerbated by more than four years of shameless partisan warfare by the radical Left against President Trump and his huge support base. Out of the turmoil of the 2020 elections, Joe Biden, a credentialed leftist with decades of Washington and global insider pedigree to complement his faltering cognitive abilities, took over the White House along with his even weirder and more radical running mate, Kamala Harris. The odd inaugural couple promised to restore dignity and civility to the White House, and American prestige and respect abroad. But Biden's avuncular and moderate persona evaporated upon his swearing-in, and the ensuing months have seen America swept into a social, political, and economic maelstrom with no end in sight.

For one thing, the runaway inflation now riveting everyone's attention started gaining steam only months after Biden's inauguration, and has been steadily accelerating ever since. The Consumer Price index (CPI) rose 7.9 percent from February 2021 to February 2022, the largest such increase since July 1981, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics — this, following an increase of 7.5 percent from January 2021 to January 2022. And in March, the inflation rate surged again, to

a blistering 8.5 percent above March 2021 figures. In other words, consumer prices are not only increasing, the rate of increase is increasing as well.

Worrisome as such figures are, they fail to capture the full magnitude of the situation, since the CPI is conveniently weighted to give more heft to certain categories, such as food, whose price increases have tended to be less pronounced than others. The price of new vehicles, for example, grew at a rate of 12.5 percent from March 2021 to March 2022, significantly higher than the overall CPI, and marking the sixth consecutive month of the largest year-on-year advances for automobile prices since 1975. Yet the March figures for used cars and trucks are far more dismaying, with an annual rise of 35.3 percent (down somewhat from February's 41.2 percent). Aggregate energy prices have also risen at a shocking pace, logging a 32-percent increase from March of last year to this (and significantly exceeding February's already-vertiginous rate of 25.6 percent). And the price of gasoline has risen faster still, at a whopping 48 percent (a 10-percent increase from February's figure), while fuel oil has increased by an astounding 70.1 percent (a huge jump over February's formidable 43.6-percent increase). Electricity and natural-gas utility costs have risen by 11.1 and 21.6 percent, respectively. Housing prices, meanwhile, are reckoned separately, but, according to the latest results published by the Federal Housing Finance Agency, they rose by 18.2 percent from January 2021 to January 2022.

These figures might seem typical of Third World failed states rife with corruption and fiscal mismanagement, but they are now being acknowledged even by the most fervid supporters of the Democratic establishment, as the enormity of Biden's economic and financial policies has begun to settle in. The Biden administration, true to its leftist character, has sought to transfer responsibility for the unfolding catastrophe to a range of convenient bugbears: wicked capitalists, Donald Trump, right-wing extremists, the coronavirus pandemic, supply-chain bottlenecks, and, most recently, the irredeemably evil Vladimir Putin and his dark legions. While the Covid pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine have certainly shocked international trade and finance, they are little more than minor contributors to the sprawling catastrophe that is the Biden economy.

AP Images

Driving inflation: Bidenflation is proving broad-based, driving up prices of not only groceries but also much bigger-ticket items such as automobiles.

Root Cause of Inflation

First, a quick primer on the nature and cause of inflation. Contrary to popular belief, inflation does not simply mean "when prices rise," since rising prices can be both geographically localized and limited to certain goods. For example, a natural disaster such as an earthquake or hurricane will often create shortages of certain goods and corresponding localized price increases, temporary anomalies that are soon corrected by broader market forces. But when prices rise generally, and across an entire country, inflation is at work. Still, generally rising prices per se do not constitute inflation, but are instead its effect. Inflation itself is properly defined as an artificial increase in the money supply brought about by government, working through the banking system. Inflation is wholly a creation of government and its most powerful adjunct, the banks, and has been a permanent feature of American life since the creation of the modern Federal Reserve more than a century ago. Politicians love inflation, because it allows them to create money for all sorts of expensive government projects without having to impose taxes that will anger the people. In other words, as economist Ludwig von Mises long ago observed, "inflation is not a catastrophe of the elements or a disease that comes like the plague. Inflation is a policy."

The reason that inflationary policies are so favored by the political class is that they are, in fact, a tax, borne primarily by the middle and lower classes — but a tax whose true nature can be concealed from the general public. By destroying the value of savings, inflation strips wealth away from the frugal just as surely as an open hike on income or sales taxes will do; but because so few understand that inflation, like other forms of taxation, is a deliberate policy, it is politically far more palatable than traditional tax levies. The Biden inflationary episode is being caused by the deliberate pumping of trillions of new dollars into an already-

bloated money supply, since Biden is both unwilling to cut the massive cost for existing government programs and unable (so far) to persuade Congress to authorize a hike in direct taxation. Not only that, the Biden administration and its compliant Congress have spent trillions of dollars on new government programs, including a welter of "stimulus checks" proffered to Americans as a bribe for their continued electoral support.

AP Images

Stop the presses! As always, inflation is wholly a creation of government, working in concert with the banking system. Government first borrows large sums, and then "monetizes" debt by issuing new money, both via computer entry and via old-fashioned printing presses.

Economic Fallacies

Nowadays, inflationary policy has a name: modern monetary theory (MMT). In essence MMT argues that, because government has a monopoly on the fiat (unbacked) money it creates, and because that money is legal tender in the payment of taxation, printing money is a closed loop that funds government, and the massive public-sector debt it incurs is offset by private-sector surpluses. And if inflation causes prices to rise too far, too fast, then government can simply raise taxes to restore equilibrium. In this airy-fairy realm, unlimited prosperity, full employment, and other phantasms are to be had by a simple flourish of the fiat monetary wand. Some of these magical features of MMT were listed by John Harvey in *Forbes*:

• "We have the ability to produce goods and services on a level never before seen by human society. There is no logical reason anyone (e.g., the unemployed) should have to go without. It is immoral."

• "Money is not scarce. Both the private and public sector create it with a keystroke. The mechanism by which each works is different, of course."

• "The US government can never default on debt denominated in its own currency which it can issue."

• "The public sector's deficit is the private sector's surplus. This is not a theory, it's basic accounting. If the government spends more than it taxes, then the private sector earns more than it pays on April 15."

• "If we have idle resources, there is absolutely nothing preventing the US government from activating them by using newly created money. We are, of course, talking about labor here."

• "It is immoral for the government not to act when a) we have the ability to produce goods and services for these people and b) they want to work."

Seldom have so many fallacies been conflated in a single theory, or been dressed in more beguiling language. Unlike the ranting, angry cadences of Marxist economists, or the snide elitism of Keynesians, modern monetary theorists are an optimistic bunch. In the world of MMT, it turns out that, after all, there is such a thing as a free lunch, and money really does grow on trees. From the perspective of this cloud-cuckoo land, the dire warnings of free-market theorists and their obsession with such unappealing facts as scarcity, demand, thrift, and marginal utility seem bleak and pessimistic. Yet each of the above fallacies avoids inconvenient truths about the reality of the free market. For example, under the first bullet point, there are certainly logical reasons for people to "go without," among them an unwillingness to work and an unwillingness to practice thrift. In point of fact, "going without" is the entire point of economics, which is about how and why people make choices, given the universal and unavoidable fact of scarcity (i.e., the fact that we all have wants and needs that will go unsatisfied, because of the infinite scope of human desires as against the finite nature of resources). Far from being immoral, "going without" is the very essence of moral behavior, morality being the ability to exercise self-control and limit one's desire for personal gratification.

As for the second bullet point, money is indeed not scarce in a fiat monetary system. And that is a problem, not a benefit, because abundant money enriches the few while impoverishing the many. Like so many other erroneous strands of economic thought, MMT commits the rather obvious fallacy of confusing money with wealth. Any trillionaire from Zimbabwe understands the difference, however.

The claim that the "US can never default on its debt" as long as it is denominated in its own currency is not new. It is also not correct. Any government, in dire enough straits, is capable of default, regardless of what law (in America's case, constitutional law) may say to the contrary. But even this assumes that a default is only of the overt, messy type. In point of fact, the constant devaluation of the U.S. dollar by deliberate inflationary policy constitutes a kind of stealth default — a fact of which foreign lenders are well aware. Governments' ability to borrow (and, hence, to create inflationary currency) is limited by the willingness of creditors to lend them

money. While domestic creditors may persist in the illusions of self-interest, foreign creditors are much less charitable.

Moreover, the United States did default on its obligations, if not technically on debt, when it unilaterally "closed the gold window" in 1971, thereby repudiating its promise to foreign holders of U.S. dollars to redeem them in gold if asked to do so. That action of President Nixon led to an international collapse in confidence in the dollar and in the promises of the U.S. government. Much of the economic malaise of the '70s stemmed from this single dishonest act.

As for the fourth bullet, the assertion of public debt being offset by private surplus is the zero-sum fallacy in different garb, and also betrays a complete lack of understanding of how capital is created and the differences between public and private finances. All activities undertaken by government are coercive, whereas actions in the private sector are voluntary — except where government is involved. Thus the payment of taxes by the private sector to fund government debt and expenditures is not voluntary; it involves a forcible extraction of resources from the voluntary, private sector that would otherwise be allocated elsewhere. Investment and savings, on the other hand, are voluntary, and as such can create wealth *ex nihilo* by sheer innovation. Note this crucial difference: Governments can only create money (and a poor excuse for money, at that), whereas the private sector can create wealth. And, whereas government money can only be created via the accumulation of debt, private creation of wealth involves the creation of assets. But if government money creation becomes too excessive, the coercive measures (taxation and regulation) required to maintain the system will dampen and discourage innovation and investment. The end result: a society with lots of money (such as Zimbabwe or Argentina), but little wealth.

The fifth bullet is just a restatement of the old Keynesian fallacy about misallocated resources, as if supply and demand were completely separate things instead of two different sides of the same coin. Chronic over- and underproduction are symptoms of planned economies, not the free market. Yet this fallacy is pervasive, and "idle resources" is one of the most common pretexts for government interference in the workings of the free market.

AP Images

Radical change: The radical Left, led by the likes of Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, has been pushing for massive new programs such as the infamous "Green New Deal," which continue to drive government spending — and inevitable inflation — through the roof.

Interestingly, the last bullet point is correct, although not in the way the author intended. Government can, in fact, do a lot to help guarantee high employment and abundance for all, and it has a moral obligation to do so. What is this obligation? To do everything in its power to encourage the operation of the free market, by refraining from interference via regulation, excessive taxation, and pernicious monetary policy. But few economists, especially those in the pay of governments or government-related special interests such as universities, would ever make such a recommendation!

Bidenomics

To say that President Biden and most of his administration are in the thrall of MMT theorists would be an understatement. The so-called Squad, whose radical "Green New Deal"-centered agenda has been driving Democratic policymaking since their triumphant sweep of the 2020 elections, are effusive in their praise of MMT. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), the outspoken leader of the group, has pointed to MMT as the solution to all the budgetary challenges of enacting the Green New Deal and other multi-trillion dollar boondoggles. After all, MMT advocates printing money to pay for everything — and raising taxes to dampen the more toxic effects of inflation.

Another outspoken acolyte of MMT, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), has had a significant effect on Bidenomics because of the collaboration between the Sanders and Biden camps after Biden became the Democratic nominee. One of Sanders' most prominent campaign advisors on economics was Stephanie Kelton, a professor of economics at Stony Brook University and prominent advocate of MMT. She transitioned into a key role on the "Economic Unity Task Force" set up to harmonize the economic policies of Biden and Sanders. L. Randall Wray, another prominent MMT theorist, has been advising Democratic lawmakers in Washington, and recently told the *Washington Times*:

> MMT has definitely influenced the Dem side of the budget committee as well as some others. I recently gave a presentation to the [Congressional

> Budget Office], and I think Stephanie Kelton did too, or is set to do one — by invitation, so they are at least interested…. MMT is not chiefly a theory; it is a description of reality, sort of like evolution versus creationism. We do have some policy prescriptions, but most of our work is simply describing the way sovereign government spends. The "creationists" — deficit hawks and doves — are describing a world that does not exist.

Presumptuous language, coming from a supporter of an economic theory that denies the reality of virtually everything affirmed by common sense!

Given MMT's advocacy of indebtedness, it is no surprise that debt, the handmaiden of inflation, also continues to rise steeply on Biden's watch, although Biden is but the latest in a long line of presidents, including his immediate predecessor, who have opted to ignore the problem. In 2021, the national debt surpassed $27 trillion, and as of the writing of this article, has exceeded $30.3 trillion. Such a figure may seem remote and irrelevant, since warnings about American indebtedness have been sounding for decades, yet the debt continues to pile up, seemingly without any consequences.

But that was before soaring inflation rates. With inflation now seemingly out of control, the major tool that the Federal Reserve has to combat it, or at least its most grievous effects, is raising interest rates. Raising interest rates discourages borrowing money, and a lowered demand for credit means that the banking system will be unable to create as much new money. But it also means that interest rates on debt, such as on new or rolled-over government bonds, will be much higher, making it far more difficult for the government to service its existing debt. The major reason that the Fed has kept interest rates low for decades has been to avoid pushing up the interest that the government would have to pay on existing and future debt.

If interest rates rise too far, they risk pushing America into default. If they are kept low under a weak economy, runaway inflation may destroy the value of the dollar, leading to insolvency by a different path.

In addition to inflation and debt, the Biden administration's anti-business posture has produced a broad range of policy decisions that have contributed greatly to America's economic malaise.

AP Images

Asset inflation: Housing prices, too, are headed for the ionosphere — good news for some homeowners, but bad for would-be buyers.

Crippling Regulations

In addition to inflation and debt, the Biden administration's anti-business posture has produced a broad range of policy decisions — mostly designed to aggressively undo everything accomplished by the Trump administration — that have contributed greatly to America's economic malaise. One of the worst, as well as the most brazen, was Biden's immediate moves to reverse Trump-era policies on energy production that had led to a welcome end to American reliance on oil imported from the Middle East, Venezuela, Russia, and other parts of the world historically hostile to American interests. Under Trump, the production of domestic oil and natural gas soared, while the long-awaited Keystone XL Pipeline, which would provide a massive influx of oil from the tar sands of Alberta, was finally cleared for construction. But on his first day as president, Biden canceled the Keystone XL Pipeline, infuriating our Canadian friends and leaving thousands of construction workers already building the pipeline suddenly out of work. This action alone sent a clear and chilling message to the entire energy sector: The new administration was consumed by the radical Left's reflexive hatred for traditional energy resources, and was on a mission to end American "dependence" on fossil fuels, no matter what the cost to the American people.

Nor did the Biden administration stop with the Keystone project. In addition, Biden

- Suspended new federal oil and gas leases,

AP Images

Pipe down: Closing down the Keystone XL Pipeline project, along with halting further oil exploration in the United States, has restored American dependence on gas from the likes of Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Russia, and Iran, and exacerbated the effects of inflation on energy prices.

• Imposed higher drilling fees on federal lands, and

• Began pushing aggressively for the radical "Green New Deal" designed to put an end to the use of oil, natural gas, and coal for energy production, and replace them with such costly and inefficient alternatives as solar and wind power.

The message was crystal clear: Biden and the radical Left were now waging an unprecedented war on the energy sector. Higher energy prices, far from being a costly consequence of bad policy, were a hoped-for outcome, since they would discourage Americans from relying on oil, coal, and natural gas — unapologetic social engineering at its worst.

All of these factors led to soaring energy costs well before the first Russian troops began massing along the Ukrainian border last fall. Yet the moment the invasion of Ukraine began, and the inevitable global economic shock pushed oil prices still higher, the Biden administration began blaming everything on Vladimir Putin. Following America's efforts to lead a global embargo on Russian oil (oil America would not have needed at all, had the Trump-era energy policies remained in place), Biden began negotiating with other, equally repellent regimes to import oil to America's self-hobbled energy sector. Americans were treated to the ugly spectacle of the Biden administration groveling before the likes of Venezuela and Iran, pleading with them to send more oil to the United States, in order to alleviate an energy crisis entirely of Biden's making. In the bizarro world of Biden and his fellow ideological contortionists, it is righteous to embargo the wicked Russians, while making nice to Venezuelan Marxists and radical Islamic Iranian terrorists, in order to buy their oil as a replacement for the oil we refuse to drill on our own territory. And the hardship Americans are now enduring from the record fuel prices is written off as collateral damage for the holy cause of weaning Americans from fossil fuels.

By Design — but Not Inevitable

The cumulative effect of the Biden economic program has been rampant inflation, skyrocketing national debt, and continued economic malaise, with an increasing number of economic forecasters predicting a major recession on the horizon. With American personal wealth shrinking dramatically, thanks to the rise in costs for fuel, housing, vehicles, food, and almost everything else, we are now witnessing a significant degradation of most Americans' standard of living on a scale not seen since at least the 1970s. If additional parts of Biden's program are implemented — massive tax hikes and the Green New Deal, in particular — we could see America permanently impoverished.

One looming consequence of persistent inflation will be a collapse of global confidence in the U.S. dollar, and its eventual rejection as the world's reserve currency. The current arrangement, formalized at the end of World War II, has benefited the United States enormously, shielding Americans from the full effects of inflation and guaranteeing American economic and financial preeminence. But with the dramatically shrinking dollar, discussion is growing about replacing or supplementing the American dollar as a reserve currency, with both the euro and the renminbi in serious contention.

America has probably never yet witnessed such a blatant and unapologetic effort to deliberately undermine from within American strength, stability, and prestige as the one now being waged by President Biden and his radical leftist minions. The contempt held by "woke" leftists for the United States and their fervent desire to radically overhaul her government, society, and morals have been on display for years. They understand, just as the Clintons did a generation ago, that almost everything hinges on economics. Their misguided policies, and the calamities stemming therefrom, are not mistakes; they are part of a deliberate agenda to take America down an entirely new path — one that most Americans would reject if they clearly understood the intended destination. The only question remaining is whether Americans will allow them to succeed. ■

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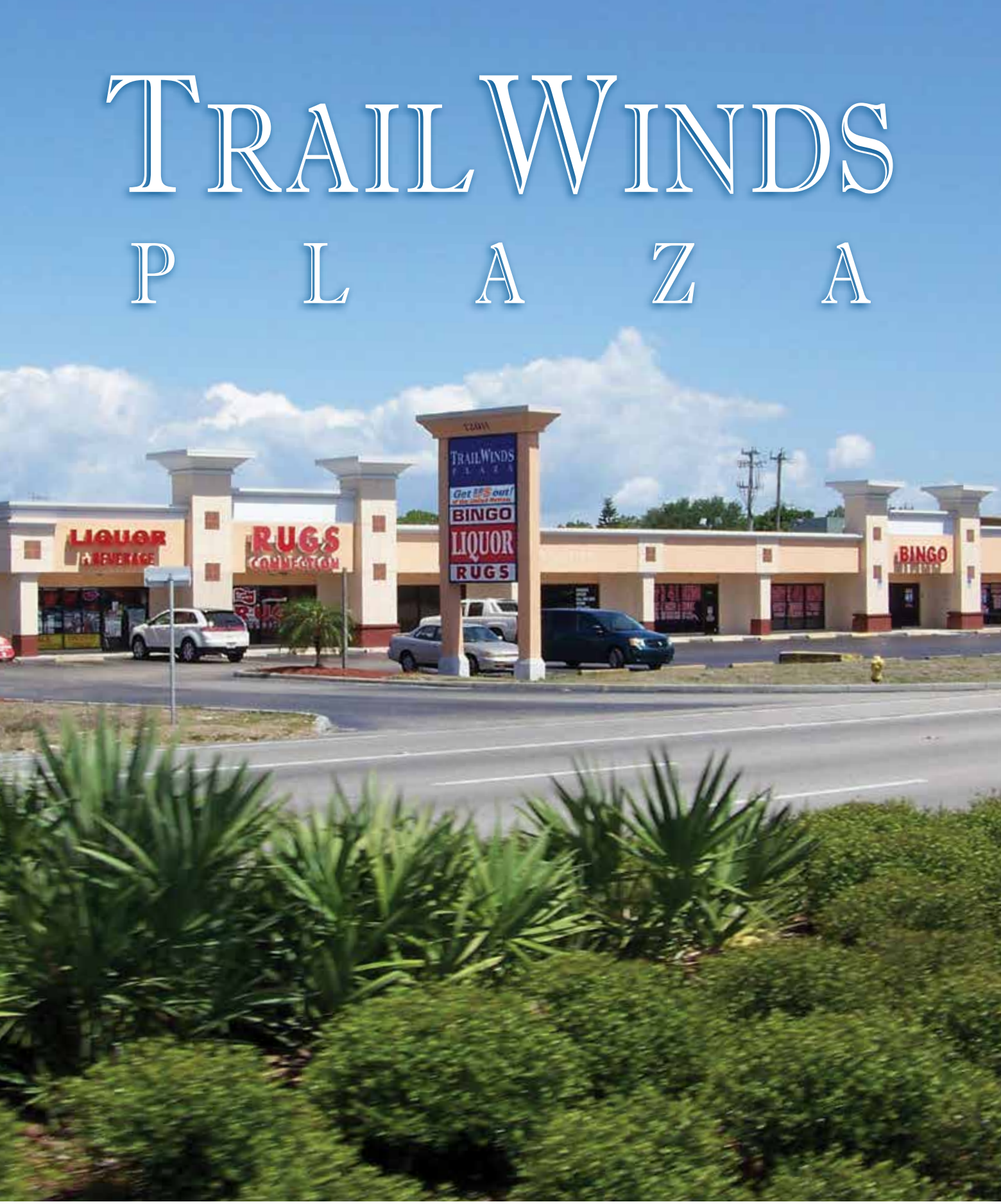

Cleveland Ave. (Rt. 41) | Ft. Myers, Florida | Stamra Inc.

Stark Raving Green

What will it take to reach Biden's lofty goals of zero carbon emissions by 2050? The answer may surprise you.

AP Images

No comparison: Orlando's six-megawatt solar farm powers 2,100 homes, but only when the Sun is shining. In the distance, the 929 MW coal- and natural-gas-fired Stanton Energy Center serves 650,000 homes around the clock.

by Ed Hiserodt & Rebecca Terrell

2050: That's the deadline that President Joe Biden has set to decarbonize the U.S. power sector and supposedly save the planet from man-made climate catastrophe. In issuing his December executive order prioritizing a "Clean Energy Economy," Eco-Joe pledged you, the American taxpayer, to spend billions in the next three decades to achieve net-zero carbon emissions "across federal operations" by mid-century.

Blue-state governors and some power companies hail the proposals as groundbreaking, according to the International Business Times. However, Biden is facing hostility from Republicans and coal-producing states, who are challenging the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Supreme Court about whether the administration has authority to implement the scheme.

What few are talking about is how unfeasible the plans actually are. They "are not just impossible. They are pie-in-the-sky, flying unicorns, bull-goose looney impossible," writes analyst Willis Eschenbach in his article *Bright Green Impossibilities* posted at the award-winning science blog Watts Up With That?

Eschenbach's critique may seem harsh, but is it justified? To answer that question, we'll review what he postulates it will take to accomplish Biden's plans. First, a brief tutorial is necessary to understand terms. Then we'll look at world energy needs and determine what portion the United States will require.

Ed Hiserodt is a contributor to The New American *and Rebecca Terrell is a senior editor.*

Generating Electricity

Energy is always measured as power generated or consumed over a period of time. A familiar unit is the kilowatt-hour (kWh), which means one thousand watts of power used in one hour. The average U.S. home uses around 1,000 kWhs of electrical energy per month, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). But when referencing electricity needs across the globe per year, we are entering the realm of trillions of kilowatt-hours. Luckily, there is another prefix that conveniently stands for all those zeros: the petawatt is one trillion kilowatts.

The World Energy Council estimates that, based on current trends, by 2050, total global energy consumption will reach 244 petawatt-hours per year (PWh/yr). So-called renewables make up around 20 percent of the current average energy mix. This includes wind and solar along with biomass, geothermal, hydro, and tidal power. These must replace roughly 80 percent — or 195 PWhr/yr — if eco-alarmists pull the plug on demonized "fossil" fuels.

Since "renewable energy" purists focus on wind and solar, we'll simply install more windmills and solar panels. How many will we need? That answer requires a few calculations, starting with worldwide estimates and from there, determining the U.S. contribution.

First, we establish how much new energy-generating capacity is required by dividing 195 PWhr/yr by the number of hours in a year: 8,766. The answer is approximately 22 terawatts (TW).

Per the United Nations Paris climate agreement, the world has until January 1, 2050 to add this 22 TW of generating capacity. With little more than 10,000 days in which to build, install, test, and commission all the new generators, we need to add roughly 2.2 gigawatts (GW) of energy generating capacity *each day* until 2050. (The computation is 22 TW divided

by 10,000 days = 2.2 GW.) You read that right: an additional 2.2 GW *per day* of "renewables" added to the energy mix if we are to phase out the eco-banes of coal, oil, and natural gas.

An Aside

Before looking at how many wind turbines and solar panels that number entails, it's important to address several points. First, electrical energy must be produced as it is used, and used as it is produced. Obviously, there are peaks and troughs in demand. Electricity distributors quantify these fluctuations with a peak-to-average ratio, which Eschenbach acknowledges could be as high as 2.3. He also admits that roughly 15-percent reserve capacity is needed to ensure grid stability. Together these two factors can more than double our 22 TW figure.

Other variations in efficiency and heat loss would further influence the number, not to mention the additional energy necessary to manufacture and install the myriad generators that carbon-neutral goals demand. However, for brevity's sake, we will omit these considerations because even if we cut our conservative figures in half, the result would still send unicorns into orbit.

Additionally, Eschenbach penned his analysis more than one year ago, just as Biden re-joined the UN Paris climate treaty, pledging our nation to climate neutrality by 2050. Eschenbach's points bear repeating in light of the recent executive order, and our analysis updates his calculations with current numbers.

It's Not Easy Being Green

Armed with our 2.2 GW estimate, let's calculate how many clean, green generators we will need to add each day across the globe by 2050. We'll start with that darling of the green-set: wind.

The Department of Energy reports that the average power rating of turbines in the United States is three megawatts (MW), which is 3,000 kW. This "nameplate rating" does not reflect how much the turbine will actually contribute, only its capability under ideal conditions. Since wind doesn't blow all the time, well-sited turbines average about 35 percent of nameplate capacity. A three MW-rated turbine would therefore produce around one MW on average.

In issuing his December executive order prioritizing a "Clean Energy Economy," Eco-Joe pledged you, the American taxpayer, to spend billions in the next three decades to achieve net-zero carbon emissions "across federal operations" by mid-century.

AP Images

Zero carbon: Pennsylvania's Limerick nuclear station operates at 100 percent of its 1,200 megawatt rating and powers more than two million households while emitting no carbon.

That means we'd better get busy building, installing, commissioning, and bringing online 2,200 turbines *each day* between now and 2050.

Keep in mind that these are not Don Quixote's windmills. Modern turbines tower 30 stories or more above the ground, with blades that can add nearly 200 feet to overall height. Positioned too closely to each other, turbulence from upwind rotors would destroy downwind machines. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates about 85 acres per megawatt of nameplate capacity for each omnidirectional turbine. That means clearing nearly 880 square miles every day, or almost 8.8 million square miles across the globe by 2050. (By comparison, North America is 9.54 million square miles in area.)

Perhaps this is a bad time to ask what happens when wind stops blowing and there is no reliable generator to take up the slack. Here's a lesson from Down Under: After the government closed Victoria's coal-burning Hazelwood power station in 2017, an ensuing "wind drought" ushered in blackouts and skyrocketing usage rates. "The drop in wind supply pushed average South Australian prices for the June quarter to $116 per MWh, up from $81 in the previous June quarter," reported *The Australian*. "40,000 homes are now without power in 37 degree [Celsius] heat," tweeted Australian politician Matthew Guy the following summer.

Never fear; solar is here! However, you may be disappointed to know NREL posits that a utility-scale solar installation averages about 8.3 watts per square meter (6.9 watts per square yard), depending on multiple variables including location, temperature, and time of year. To deliver our daily 2.2 GW, we would have to cover more than 100 square miles of

Eyesore: A mix of aging and updated wind turbines clutters the landscape outside Palm Springs, California, where state law requires all electricity to be generated from zero-carbon sources by 2045.

AP Images

graded and treeless ground with functioning solar panels *every single day* from now until 2050. And every night when the sun isn't shining, solar will need reliable backup. Wind could help only on blustery evenings.

There is a clean-energy solution that can back up wind, solar, or any other unrealistic enterprise of leftist lunacy, though its reputation is sullied by decades of unscientific propaganda and irrational fear of radiation. In fact, nuclear power could easily stand on its own and replace all so-called renewables and fossil fuels, but we'd need to get started immediately bringing a 2.2 GW power plant online every day from now until 2050. That's a total of 10,000 new nuclear reactors, twice as large as those you are likely to see from the highway as you drive by.

U.S. Requirements

So far we have discussed global green needs. Since EIA estimates that the United States uses one-sixth of the world's energy, we can easily determine our share by simple division.

WIND: Watch out trees! We need a lot of open space — more than 105 square miles — for 267 wind turbines to be installed *each and every day*. That amounts to nearly 30 percent of available square mileage in the country by the time we're through, not to mention that we will need to replace many of them before 2050 since a turbine's average lifespan is 20 years. And bye-bye, birdies; the American Bird Conservancy estimates that wind turbines kill as many as 1.17 million birds annually. That number is bound to rise exponentially as wind farms expand. Likely so will negative effects on human health. Research from the Washington University School of Medicine reveals problems including nausea, vertigo, tinnitus, ear pressure, and sleep disturbance reported in areas where turbines are installed. Additionally, says Eschenbach, going green with wind means a complete revamp of the electrical grid, from power stations to gas-heated homes.

SOLAR: Every day until 2050 it will take roughly 17 square miles of treeless land for utility-scale solar panel installation. That comes to 170,000 square miles of denuded countryside, much of which has hefty competition. The Pennsylvania State Grange is now lobbying its state legislature to protect productive farmland from solar-project encroachment, and farmers in Iowa are hoping for passage of a state senate bill to outlaw solar installations on quality farmland. Eschenbach quotes the California Bureau of Land Management running into siting problems since land set aside for solar "must not disturb native wildlife or endangered species." Moreover, the average lifespan of solar panels is 25 years, so many will not live to see their day of green glory in 2050. And as does wind, solar requires a complete grid overhaul.

NUCLEAR: We could save ourselves the grid revamp by going nuclear, which would require 1,667 new reactors by 2050 to reach Biden's goal. Even if we only use nuclear as backup, Eschenbach estimates needing between 50 and 90 percent of the total generating capacity in nuclear "for the all-too-frequent times when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing." The United States currently has about 104 nuclear power generating plants, built over the last 70 years. Some required up to a decade of litigation and approvals from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other bureaucratic agencies. We had better get litigating pronto if we're going to build at least 833 new nuclear plants by 2050.

The Costs

Admittedly, the above analysis omits many variables that also merit consideration. For example, we haven't looked at the cost of each installation project in terms of time, energy, real estate, and manufacturing. Eschenbach quotes top consulting firm McKinsey, which slaps a price tag of "around $30 billion per day for the next 25 years" on UN net-zero emissions targets. However, even without that figure it is easy to see why Eschenbach calls them "looney."

Another matter we overlooked is the real-life example of Germany, where *Forbes* reports a renewables transition to the tune of $580 billion by 2025. The country is also looking at "a 50% increase in electricity prices, flat emissions, and an electricity supply that is 10 times more carbon-intensive than France's," where nuclear is king.

The punch line is that all this upheaval of world energy sectors is to prevent a hypothetical human-caused 1.5° Celsius rise in average global temperature. Perhaps that will be a consolation when we're paying exorbitant utility bills by candlelight. ■

Biden Administration Shackles Taxpayers in Carbon-capture Scheme

Last year's $1.2 trillion infrastructure bill is funneling billions into wasteful technologies that cannot survive in the free market without government subsidies and have no impact on global temperatures.

AP Images

Voice of reason: Andrew Wheeler, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency chief under Trump, eased an Obama-era rule requiring new coal plants to capture carbon, saying the technology placed "excessive burdens" on energy producers.

by Rebecca Terrell

Billions of our tax dollars are funding carbon dioxide (CO_2) harvesting across the United States. Experts say the senseless ventures have no impact on global temperatures yet are helping to fuel the energy crisis and raise already-skyrocketing prices you pay for just about everything.

CO_2 — a simple molecule that is a crucial plant food and helps make life on earth possible — has been demonized since 2007, when the U.S. Supreme Court irrationally labeled this important atmospheric gas as an "air pollutant" and granted regulatory free rein to the Environmental Protection Agency. Now, in some apparently warped spirit of Dr. Seuss, the Biden administration wants to build huge machines that suck CO_2 directly from the sky.

Carbon-capture technology has been around for decades, trapping CO_2 as it is released from refineries, manufacturing facilities, and power plants. The process is known as carbon capture and sequestration (CCS), or carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS). These methods either store the gas underground or put it to various uses such as producing high-value chemicals or extracting more petroleum from otherwise depleted oil wells. The Obama administration significantly ramped up requirements for power plants to implement inefficient CCS measures, which were lifted temporarily during Trump's White House tenure.

A technologically dubious cousin of CCS is the carbon dioxide removal (CDR) method known as direct air capture (DAC), which extracts the trace gas from the atmosphere. A May 2018 briefing published in *Geoengineering Monitor* described it as "a largely theoretical technique" that poses a number of problems aside from its exorbitant cost.

"To have any significant effect on global CO_2 concentrations, DAC would need to be rolled out on a vast scale, raising serious questions about the energy it requires, the levels of water usage for particular technologies, and the toxicity impacts from the chemical sorbents used," reads the overview. "In addition, safe and long-term CO_2 storage cannot be guaranteed, either in geological formations where leakage is a risk … or in products using CO_2, where carbon is likely to end up back in the atmosphere in one way or another."

Far be it from the Biden administration and Congress to let reality get in the way of their net-zero-by-2050 fantasies. Last November the president signed a $1.2 trillion infrastructure bill, passed by federal legislators (including 13 Republicans) in support of the "Build Back Better" agenda. Among the measure's disastrous provisions are $3.5 billion allotted to development of CCS technology and another $3.5 billion for CDR. On top of that, $2.5 billion goes to carbon storage projects, $2.1 billion to fund low-interest loans for CO_2 pipeline expansion, and hundreds of millions more to support associated federal and state tax-dollar-squandering provisions. JD Supra lists a few, including $15 million and $100 million prizes for competitions to develop precommercial and commercial DAC technology.

Those contests will be part of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DoE) "Earth-

AP Images

Tilting at windmills: Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm calls carbon dioxide removal a "game changer," as her agency invests billions in energy-intensive technologies aimed at removing the vital gas directly from the sky.

shots" initiative, announced last November as "the U.S. government's first major effort" in promoting CDR. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm called it a crucial move to "meet the urgent needs of the climate crisis." The agency anticipates removing "gigatons" of CO_2 from the air and storing it "for less than $100/ton of net CO_2-equivalent."

"I don't think those numbers are credible," Howard Hertzog, senior engineer at the MIT Energy Initiative, told Climate Now in an interview last August. He was discussing estimates made by Canadian-based DAC developer Carbon Engineering, which claimed "they can do it for between $100 and $300 a ton of CO_2." However, based on the pace of emerging technology he forecasts the realistic range will be $600 to $1,000 per ton by 2030.

It's a hefty price tag considering the claim that in order to limit global warming to 1.5° Celsius by mid-century "we'll have to remove 10 billion tons per year of CO_2 from the atmosphere," says Dr. Roger Aines of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

They have a long way to go, despite CCS currently in place. For example, Grist reports around 5,000 miles of CO_2 pipeline nationwide that conveys the trapped substance to underground storage. Experts estimate between 30,000 and 65,000 miles of pipeline will be needed to achieve government goals, and some worry about significant safety issues as the current network massively expands under generous infrastructure funding.

Risky Business

The nonprofit watchdog Pipeline Safety Trust (PST) calls CO_2 pipelines "Dangerous and Under-Regulated" in its March 2022 report. Highlighting the ineptitude of government supervision, PST explains that pipeline regulations have never addressed the specific dangers of CO_2 transport, though the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) has been exercising oversight since 1991.

"CO_2 is an asphyxiant which is heavier than air and therefore, after a pipeline rupture, a plume can maintain a lethal concentration over large distances," PST executive director Bill Caram said in a March press release. "There are little to no regulations around appropriate siting, limiting dangerous and corrosive impurities, or building the pipelines to withstand the unique properties of transporting high pressure CO_2."

Residents of Satartia, Mississippi, learned in February 2020 just how dangerous it can be. A pipeline operated by Denbury Resources in the hills just outside town ruptured, sending a dense cloud descending on the village. Within minutes individuals began collapsing in their homes. Others tried to escape, but their vehicles "just shut off, since they need oxygen to burn fuel," reported HuffPost.

"While ambient CO_2 is odorless, colorless and heavier than air, the industrial CO_2 in Denbury's pipeline has been compressed into a liquid, which is pumped through pipelines under high pressure," the article explained. "A rupture in this kind of pipeline sends CO_2 gushing out in a dense, powdery white cloud that sinks to the ground and is cold enough to make steel so brittle it can be smashed with a sledgehammer."

The incident sent 49 of the area's 300 residents to the hospital, while most of those remaining had to evacuate. No one died, but an emergency authority said many would not have survived if the disaster had occurred at night while people were sleeping. Residents now live with residual lung, stomach, and neurological problems they never experienced before. Adding to the stress are worries that it could happen again. In fact, another accident spewed even more CO_2 the following October during repairs to the damaged section, causing repeat evacuations. Even now, "PHMSA has yet to release an incident report detailing the cause of the rupture," reports Grist.

A Costly Mistake

Mississippi also holds a lesson in the economic costs of CDR. In an op-ed for *The Hill*, Manhattan Institute senior fellow Robert Bryce cited the Kemper County power plant owned by Southern Company, "a project that aimed to prove feasibility of CCS." DoE subsidized Kemper in 2010 with $270 million, but when construction time nearly doubled and expenses more than tripled over original expectations, "Southern canceled the project, sticking ratepayers with about $1.1 billion of those costs."

Of completed CCS projects, Bryce explained all are expensive. "They require huge amounts of energy to separate and capture" CO_2, and removing "it from flue gas cuts a power plant's output by as much as 28 percent." Moreover, "disposing of just 10 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions with CCS would require build-

ing an industry as large and sophisticated as the global oil sector," he noted.

That couldn't happen without Biden's infrastructure boost; before it, CCS was dying on the vine. *CEP* magazine, a publication of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, reported last year that "the high cost of CCS and the intrinsic low value of CO_2 has led to the stagnation of the market," and that in 2020, CCS captured only 40 million metric tons of CO_2 globally.

Yet the price of CCS pales in comparison to DAC. "Climate Experts Say Vacuuming CO_2 From the Sky Is a Costly Boondoggle," reads a recent *Time* magazine headline. "The U.S. Government Just Funded It Anyway." The article describes pricey plans for direct-air capture hubs yet to be built, with very little return on investment foreseen. Each would be "able to pull a million tons of CO_2 out of the air" annually, though supposedly "to make a dent in climate change, the world would have to be sequestering thousands of times more carbon dioxide than those projects will." Moreover, *Geoengineering Monitor* reports that DAC requires so much energy that some promoters "have proposed to use 'small nuclear power plants' connected to DAC installations."

Environmentalists raise other objections to CDR. The Sierra Club calls carbon-capture projects "greenwashing schemes" actually intended to promote enhanced oil recovery. Enhanced oil recovery pumps trapped CO_2 into depleted oil wells to extract more petroleum, a move that activists grumble helps perpetuate "dependence on fossil fuels." They complain that industrial uses end up releasing captured CO_2 back into the atmosphere, and that stored CO_2 can eventually leak out as well. Though their misguided goal is an end of all hydrocarbon-sourced energy, they also acknowledge the dangers of CO_2 pipeline leaks and the threat that pipelines pose to private property rights through the inappropriate use of eminent domain.

In areas of planned pipeline expansion, landowners are fighting back. *AgWeek* reports that dozens of counties across the Midwest have adopted resolutions opposing the projects, and farmers are refusing to sign easements. There is even activity in the Iowa legislature to limit eminent-domain authority of the state utilities board. Public comments on permits in Iowa and South Dakota are "overwhelmingly against the pipeline." North Dakotans are also opposed, but face a governor who "has been vocal in his support of carbon capture projects" and sits on a three-man industrial commission in charge of storage-site approval. Minnesota fares better, having no state agency charged with carbon-pipeline oversight, a situation that forces developers to negotiate with individual counties.

AP Images

Carbon-capture fail: Before developers pulled the plug on carbon-capture technology at Mississippi's Kemper County energy facility, a Sierra Club analysis determined it would be the most expensive power plant ever built based on watts of electricity generated.

Carbon Crazy

The irony of CDR is that human activity has never been proven to adversely affect global temperature. A 2015 report by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change of the Heartland Institute details how UN bureaucrats came up with the anthropogenic (human-caused) hypothesis based on climate models that have since been "falsified by real-world data from a wide variety of sources." Nevertheless, UN edicts continue to influence climate policies worldwide, despite the fact that observed environmental changes are well within natural variability.

In fact, research reveals that CO_2, no matter the source, does not dictate global temperatures. Howard Hayden, retired physics professor at the University of Connecticut, explains in his book *Bass Ackwards: How Climate Alarmists Confuse Cause with Effect* that historical records prove that rising CO_2 concentration "comes after temperature changes."

Additionally, far from being a pollutant, carbon dioxide is vital to life on earth. In their book *The Many Benefits of Atmospheric CO_2 Enrichment*, researchers Sherwood and Craig Idso call it the "elixir of life" and detail 55 ways that rising levels of CO_2 benefit the earth, from advantages at the microscopic level to worldwide biodiversity.

Even if human-generated CO_2 could adversely affect climate, the federal government has absolutely no constitutional authority to subsidize or regulate the energy industry. As stated by Paul Homewood in his open letter to *The Daily Telegraph* on climate scaremongers, the solution is the free market, where "the best technologies come to the fore without the need for subsidies, regulations and mandates." Instead of chasing carbon-capture pipe dreams, elected officials should end subsidies and tax credits to worthless and dangerous CDR technologies and remove detrimental regulations on reliable energy sources that make our enviable standard of living possible. ■

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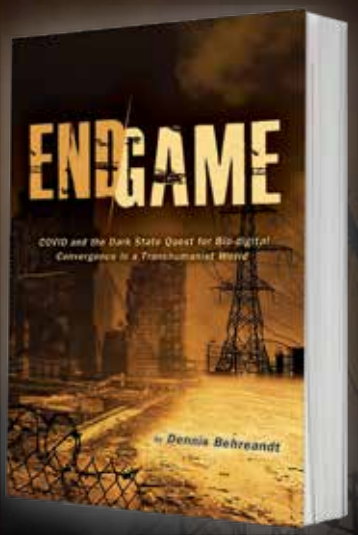

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— Ron Paul, former congressman and presidential candidate

by Dennis Behreandt

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THE NEW JUSTICE

As Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson joins the bench of the U.S. Supreme Court, what does her radical background hold in store for the country, and how can Americans protect themselves?

AP Images

Radical lineup: Newly confirmed Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson walks with President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to deliver celebratory remarks outside the White House on April 8.

by Rebecca Terrell

Major media are gushing with news that the U.S. Senate has confirmed the first black woman in history to the nation's highest court, the blatant racism and sexism of that statement notwithstanding. They praise Joe Biden for fulfilling his overtly discriminatory campaign pledge to make race and sex primary considerations in seeking a replacement, should a vacancy occur in the Supreme Court.

Biden's chance arrived as Clinton-appointed Associate Justice Stephen Breyer, the court's oldest member, conveniently announced his retirement before the midterm elections this year. Breyer's former clerk, Ketanji Brown Jackson, fit the mold. She was one of several black women considered; anyone male, Caucasian, or Asian, no matter how capable or deserving, was disqualified on the basis of race and sex.

The supreme irony of Biden's pick is that Jackson is a woman who declares herself unable to define exactly what a woman is. During Senate confirmation hearings in March when Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) asked Jackson if she could provide a definition for the word "woman," the 51-year-old federal judge answered, "No, I can't…. I'm not a biologist," in a gratuitous salute to the contemporary sexual perversion euphemistically excused as gender dysphoria. Eagle Forum stated that her dodge "leads us to believe that she will rule in favor of broadening that definition, allowing biological men to insert themselves into women's private spaces, domestic abuse shelters, and sports."

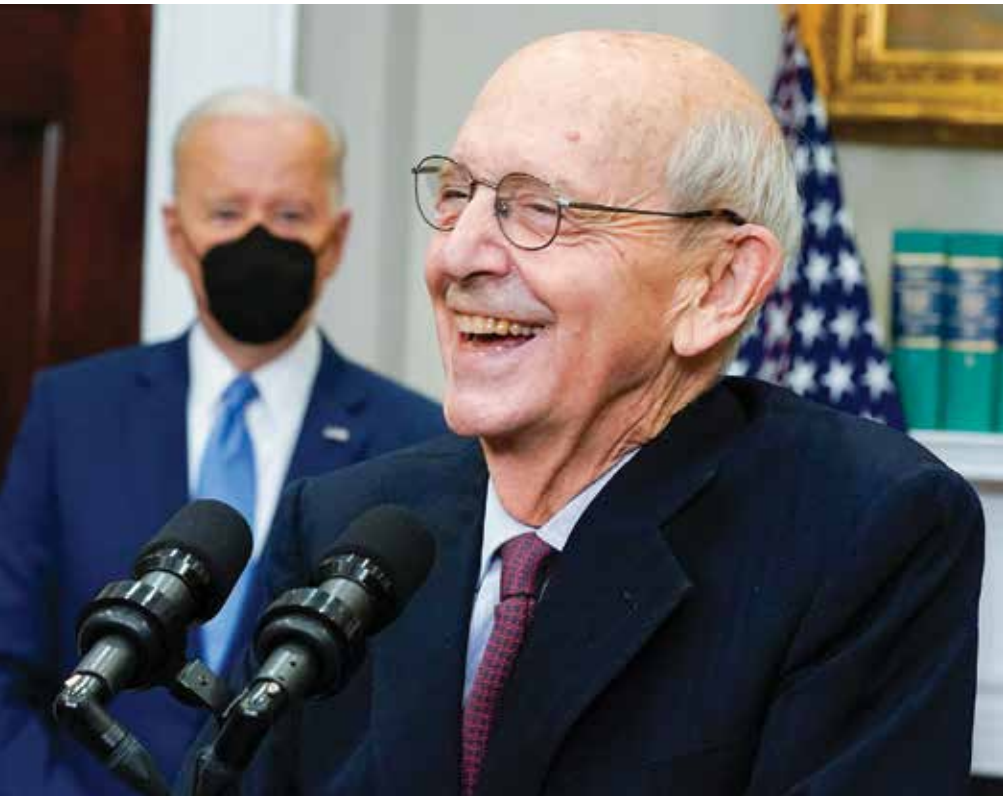
Not that Biden would have chosen anyone but a progressive, regardless of physical attributes. As Carrie Severino, president of the Judicial Crisis Network, told CNN during media speculation following Breyer's announcement, "The Democrat short listers are ones who are going to be uniform in the way they are going to vote on the court."

Potential nominees included California Supreme Court Justice Leondra Kruger, praised and promoted during her career by leftists including President Barak Obama and California Governor Jerry Brown. Other contenders were federal appeals court judges Candace Jackson-Akiwumi and Eunice Lee, both Biden appointees.

All have impressive though far-left *curricula vitae*, yet as candidates their résumés took a back seat to skin color and two X chromosomes. Should those who clamor for equality have been insulted? On the contrary, liberals rejoiced as Lady Justice had her blindfold stripped and scales tipped with brazen discrimination dictated by race-obsessed extremists. Jackson, herself, in biased remarks at the White House following her confirmation, complained about how long it has taken for a black woman to rise to the nation's highest court. "But we've made it," she reveled. "We've made it, all of us. All of us."

One of the representatives of Jackson's "us," Aimee Allison, founder of the feminist alliance She the People, told Bloomberg Law that the first black woman

Throughout her tenure on the federal sentencing commission, she argued that child pornographers are not dangerous pedophiles and that congressionally mandated five-year minimum sentences are too harsh.



AP Images

Age discrimination? Progressive groups pressured 82-year-old Justice Stephen Breyer to retire before the midterm elections so Biden could appoint a leftist.

justice "can't help but influence the way that the law is interpreted." Allison complained that the Supreme Court has been interpreting laws "for Black women without the voice of Black women."

She has Joe Biden and U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) to thank in part for that. Both publicly vowed in 2005 to block Janice Rogers Brown (a black woman) when rumors flew that President George W. Bush was considering her to replace retiring Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. At the time, Brown served on the powerful U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, but only after a vicious two-year filibuster by Democrats in the Senate, including Biden and Schumer. In his floor speech opposing Brown's nomination, then-Senator Barack Obama (D-Ill.) called her a "political activist who happens to be a judge."

Once in the White House, Obama did not hesitate to promote political activists to the bench. Case in point: He considered Ketanji Brown Jackson to replace Justice Antonin Scalia, who died in 2016. Obama had already appointed her to a federal judgeship in 2013, and last year Biden promoted her to the Washington, D.C., circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals (the same body for which he opposed Janice Brown's nomination). "That court is widely considered the second-most prestigious in the country and a feeder of Supreme Court nominees, including two of the last three chief justices," wrote Severino for *National Review* in 2021, accurately forecasting Jackson's appointment as a mere steppingstone.

Now it is Republicans' turn to complain. Hours after Jackson's confirmation, Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) launched a campaign ad touting his "nay" vote. "She's a judicial activist," he charged. "She gets outcomes she wants no matter how the law is written. When it comes to crime, her record is very, very dangerous." He crowed, "I voted no to Judge Jackson."

That was a first. He was one of only three Republicans who supported her nomination last year to the D.C. appeals court. He was also there in 2010 when the Senate confirmed her by unanimous consent to become vice chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission. Why did he not consider her soft-on-crime record dangerous until now?

Critical Race Theory

On the other hand, Texas Republican Ted Cruz voted against Jackson's appointments both this year and last, having known her progressive appetite since their Harvard Law School days in the mid-1990s. During confirmation hearings he cornered her as an outspoken proponent of critical race theory (CRT), citing evidence such as a 2020 speech at the University of Michigan law school. In it she praised the controversial 1619 Project and its founder, radical activist Nikole Hannah-Jones, who stumps for slavery reparations and erroneously asserts that Colonials fought the American Revolution primarily to defend slavery. Cruz noted that even *The New York Times* has admitted that baseless idea to be revisionist history.

Jackson brushed off her prior comments, admitting that she was merely pandering to her MLK-Day audience, assuring Cruz that CRT is not "something that I've studied or relied on, and it wouldn't be something that I would rely on if I was on the Supreme Court." When he pressed, defining CRT as a Marxist-derivate philosophy that frames all historical conflicts as racially motivated, she insisted that she has never studied CRT. "It doesn't come up in the work that I do as a judge," she repeated (under oath).

"With respect, I find that a curious statement," he answered, "because you gave a speech in April of 2015 at the University of Chicago, in which you described the job that you do as a judge." She said her work was interesting because sentencing "melds together myriad types of law," and then she listed them: criminal, administrative, constitutional, negotiations, contracts and critical race theory.

Her duplicitous answer: The quote in question referred to "sentencing policy" rather than "sentencing." When he pointed out the fact that this particular speech came only four months after she ended her five-year tenure as vice chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, which sets federal sentencing guidelines (i.e., policy), she inexplicably repeated, "None of that relates to what I do as a judge."

Cruz also noted that Jackson serves on the board of Georgetown Day School (GDS), a private preparatory institute in D.C. He called its curriculum "filled and overflowing with critical race theory." Among assigned or recommended texts for older students, he displayed *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* by CRT co-founder Richard Delgado, and *The End of Policing* by Alex Vitale, who argues for the abolition of local police. The school indoctrinates pre-K through second-graders with *Anti-Racist Baby*, teaching children that they must "confess" their racism. Third- through fifth-graders are subjected to *Stamped (For Kids)*, which illogically equates ignoring differences in skin color with ignoring racism, and provocatively asserts that native Americans and blacks throughout history "must have wished about their White oppressors: Can we send White people 'back' to Europe?" Both of these titles are by Ibram X. Kendi, the radical agitator who criticized Justice Amy Coney Barrett for her two interracial adoptions.

GDS had already come up in Senator Blackburn's opening statement, when she quoted Jackson's praise of "the transformative power of progressive education." Blackburn charged:

> You serve on the board of a school that teaches kindergartners — five-year-old children — that they can choose their gender and teaches them about so-called white privilege. This school has hosted an organization called Woke Kindergarten and pushes an anti-racist education program for white families. Your public endorsement of this type of progressive indoctrination of our children causes one great concern when it comes to how you may rule on cases involving parental rights.

Blackburn then rhetorically asked, "Is it your personal hidden agenda to incorporate critical race theory into our legal system?" Her reference was to Jackson's senior thesis, in which as a Harvard student she criticized "various court professionals" for their likelihood to serve "personal hidden agendas."

AP Images

Judicial hypocrisy: Biden said he nominated Jackson because there has never before been a black woman on the Supreme Court. He failed to mention his career opposition to conservative judge Janice Rogers Brown.

Personal Agenda?

Jackson's own record certainly reveals an agenda, though it does not seem she has done much to hide it. Both in the past and during confirmation hearings, she bragged that she does not have a judicial philosophy, for which Blackburn criticized her by observing that without one, "a judge is legally adrift and will be inclined to consider policy rather than law."

For example, several senators asked Jackson about her views on *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion — timely questions considering the upcoming *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* that promises to topple the so-called precedent set fewer than 50 years ago. In answer, Jackson confirmed her dedication to abortion by calling it "settled law" based on prior Supreme Court decisions, as if those are binding and can never be overturned regardless of constitutional principles. Hence, the America Rising PAC told the Daily Wire that Jackson "is the abortion lobby's dream" for the Supreme Court, having earned "endorsements of the nation's most prominent abortion groups," which advocate the brutal murder of the innocent unborn.

Nor is Jackson's record solicitous of children outside the womb, evincing extreme leniency toward child-pornography offenders. "These horrific videos of sex torture of little kids, including babies — and after Judge Jackson hears this evidence, she nonetheless finds every ex-

cuse she can to give the lowest sentence possible," Mike Davis of The Article III Project (A3P) told Steve Bannon on Real America's Voice.

A3P's website displays its incredible dossier of her 25-year history of shielding perverts, documentation that, Davis says, Senate Judiciary Republicans used to "build their case" against Jackson's nomination. She claimed during law school that sex-offender registries are unconstitutionally punitive. Throughout her tenure on the federal sentencing commission, she argued that child pornographers are not dangerous pedophiles and that congressionally mandated five-year minimum sentences are too harsh.

Most damning are federal felony cases over which Jackson presided with sentencing discretion during her years as a district judge. U.S. Senator Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) tried to warn his colleagues before they confirmed her for life to the nation's highest court, tweeting summaries of each instance. All involved adults who possessed and, in most cases, publicly distributed multiple images and videos of child rape and other sexual torture of young children. Two cases included intent to travel to engage in illicit sexual conduct with minors, and one offender even involved his own 10-year-old daughter in his crimes.

An incredulous Hawley quoted Jackson apologizing to a convicted child-porn criminal. Before sentencing him, she lamented, "This is a truly difficult situation. I appreciate that your family is in the audience. I feel so sorry for them and for you, and for the anguish this has caused all of you." Hawley wondered aloud who she considered the victims in this case.

"Every single case — 100 percent of them … you sentenced the defenders to substantially below" the range of federal guidelines, Cruz charged. He calculated that her sentences averaged 47.2 percent lighter than liberal prosecutors' requests, which were themselves much reduced from federal guidelines.

Jackson defended her record, saying that the senators' arguments did not take into account all factors involved, but she also absolved the criminals, excusing some of them on the unjustified basis that they are not sexually motivated, but simply "in this for either the collection, or the people who are loners and find status in their participation in the community." In an understated response, Senator Thom Tillis (R-N.C.) told her that level of empathy is "beyond what some of us would be comfortable with in administering justice."

Cruz summed up the problem with Jackson's confirmation when he recounted the hearings to Fox News' Sean Hannity. "It's a little bit of a game, unfortunately, that we've seen from Biden judicial nominees, where they claim to have no philosophy," the senator observed, "and then they get on the bench and they vote hard, hard left." He predicted that Jackson will be "very possibly the furthest left" on the Supreme Court, "particularly on criminal justice issues."

Demand Justice

His forecast is almost certainly accurate, considering the radical extremists who lobbied in support of her nomination. "Jackson has been on the Supreme Court short list of Demand Justice, to which prospects do not make the cut unless they are far to the left," Severino warned *National Review* last year.

George Soros' Open Society Policy Center seed-funded the advocacy group Demand Justice (DJ) in 2018 with $2.5 million to oppose Brett Kavanaugh's Supreme Court nomination, according to a special report issued by Capital Research Center (CRC) in 2020. DJ went on last year to spearhead a push by progressive organizations — including Black Lives Matter and Justice Democrats — calling for Breyer's retirement. Reminding him that the upcoming midterm elections spell doom for Democrats, the group's June 2021 press release remonstrated, "For the good of the country, now is the time to step aside."

Jackson ranked at the top of DJ's short list to take Breyer's place. In February it announced a $1 million-plus ad campaign to promote her nomination. Since that goal is achieved, DJ's focus will now be fixed on adding four seats to the Supreme Court to "restore balance" and "depoliticize" it, according to its website. Court-packing has been pinging madly on the radar since

AP Images

Trash talker: Elie Mystal (right) sits on the board of Demand Justice, a radical group that fanatically plugged Jackson's nomination. Mystal calls the U.S. Constitution "trash" because it was "written by slavers."

Reverse psychology: Jackson serves on the board of Georgetown Day School in Washington, D.C., which promotes critical race theory even among kindergartners and teaches them to "confess" their racism.

Biden created his left-leaning commission last year to analyze "contemporary public debate" on the Supreme Court's size and term limits for its members.

"I intend to explore why groups that are waging political war against the Court as an institution decided Judge Jackson was their special favorite," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) remarked after meeting with her in March. About their discussion he told CBS's *Face the Nation*, "I asked her to defend the court. Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Justice Breyer both publicly opposed court-packing, that is, trying to increase the number of court members in order to get an outcome you like." He said it "would have been an easy thing for her … to defend the integrity of the court. She wouldn't do that."

Likewise, when Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) asked Jackson her opinion on the subject under oath, she evasively sidestepped with: "I agree with Justice Barrett," referencing the 2020 confirmation hearings. The Senate Republican Communications Center later tweeted a fact-check that Barrett was never asked her opinion on court-packing, but simply whether the size of the Supreme Court is dictated by the Constitution. Barrett affirmed that it is not.

"Every group that wants to pack the court, that believes this court is a bunch of right-wing nuts who are going to destroy America, that considered the Constitution trash, all wanted you picked," Graham told Jackson, with a specific reference to DJ board member Elie Mystal, who on March 4 told *The View* that the U.S. Constitution is "trash" because it "was written by slavers and colonists and white people willing to make deals with slavers."

Mystal's colleagues include DJ director and former Hillary Clinton campaign spokesman Brian Fallon, and DJ chief counsel Christopher Kang. Both served as Obama administration staffers. Demand Justice and its financiers are part of a "dark money" network run by Arabella Advisors, a consulting company "formed with funding from ACORN and other far-left groups." CRC calls Arabella "the Left's best-kept secret in Washington, D.C.," as it "created and actively manages four non-profits" to carry out far-left agendas in areas such as education, healthcare, climate change, abortion, gun control, and America's courts.

The Takeaway

Americans for Limited Government (ALG) issued a statement on April 7 expressing dismay over Jackson's appointment. ALG president Rick Manning quoted McConnell, who said "the Biden Administration let the radicals run the show" in choosing what Manning described as "the most radical nominee in American history." He quipped, "For the sake of America, I hope the radical left is ultimately as disappointed in Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson as conservatives are with Chief Justice John Roberts."

Americans can do little in the judicial sphere beyond praying that their new justice will fulfill that hope and more, once she joins the court after Breyer's retirement goes into effect at the beginning of July. However, the spotlight should be on the U.S. Senate, which confirmed a judge zealously promoted by groups that label the Constitution as garbage and that are backed by billionaire globalist George Soros and other socialists who seek to fundamentally transform America into a collective dystopia. As ALG pointed out, the Senate "rushed" Jackson's confirmation through in a 53-47 vote, with the support of all Democrats as well as Republicans Susan Collins of Maine, Mitt Romney of Utah, and Alaska's Lisa Murkowski. Graham also had a hand in promoting her through the ranks last year, and the entire Senate launched her federal career in 2010.

The takeaway for voters is that the U.S. Senate is failing every American in its duty to protect us from socialist usurpers. We are proof positive of the 18th-century warning issued by Irish judge John Philpot Curran: "It is the common fate of the indolent [lazy] to see their rights become a prey to the active. The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance; which condition if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt."

More than one-third of U.S. Senate seats will be contested in this fall's midterm elections. Let's fill them with patriotic Americans ready to defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign *and domestic*. ■

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(May 30, 2022) TNA220530

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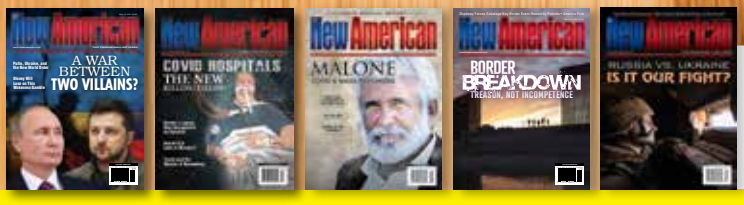

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DeSantis Shocks the System! He No Longer Is Playing Defense

by Annalisa Pesek

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis — what a hero, to *most* conservatives! The RINOs say he is "over the line," though when have they had the courage to stand up to the bullies, much less tackle them? DeSantis is on offense, and he's making the right play by retaliating against the Walt Disney Corporation, not for its "woke" viewpoints, but because nowhere in the U.S. or Florida Constitutions does it say that Disney, or any corporation, has a right to special tax breaks. Period.

In fact, as per the Florida Constitution, Section 11, "There shall be no special law or general law of local application pertaining to: private incorporation or grant of privilege to a private corporation."

Further, the children's entertainment giant publicly attempted to "commandeer the democratic process" by announcing its goal to overturn Florida law, demanding the new "Parental Rights in Education" bill "be repealed by the legislature or struck down in the court," all the while threatening to withhold political donations if that didn't happen.

AP Images

Defending the rights of parents to make appropriate decisions for *their* children, DeSantis is also standing against a company exposed for its "not-at-all-secret gay agenda" and regularly "adding queerness" to its children's programming. The governor will not allow the grooming of children in Florida, and conservatives are grateful.

Don't Mess With Florida!

"This company had a deal unlike any other company in the state of Florida or in the United States," explained DeSantis, appearing on *Tucker Carlson Tonight*. "They were self-governing, had extraordinary powers, they could build nuclear power plants, no permitting processes, a lot of tax benefits."

He continued, "that's just inappropriate and it's certainly inappropriate that they pledged themselves to mobilize their considerable corporate resources out of the coffers of this Burbank, California, corporation to overturn the rights of parents in Florida, effectively [to] commandeer our democratic process. That is something we object to."

DeSantis signed Senate Bill 4C, stripping Disney of its special districting status on April 22, shocking some prominent members of the conservative movement. Constitutional lawyer and former Trump advisor Jenna Ellis and former Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly both say Disney was exercising its right to free speech by opposing the so-called Don't Say Gay bill, and question the legality of DeSantis's move to disband the special district.

Yet as commentator Matt Walsh incisively remarked on *The Matt Walsh Show*, "you don't have a First Amendment right to tax privileges. We're so used to Republicans just being milquetoast and just being speed bumps lying down on the road and hoping they can slow the progress of the Left slightly as they run right over you. If you're used to that, it becomes a shock to the system when you don't see it."

Disney has long been running over us, using its expansive resources to support child indoctrination and abuse. Now, hav-

ing been sent the message that it is not in the interest of Floridians for Disney to maintain special privileges, perhaps it will change course.

Ron DeSantis

AP Images

Unanswered Questions

However, the disbanding of the Reedy Creek Improvement District (RCID), which houses the Disney World Resort, may be a complicated endeavor.

Epoch Times reporter John Haughey asserted that "disbanding the 55-year-old RCID could have significant impacts on Orange and Osceola County taxpayers." Haughey quoted Orange County tax collector Scott Randolph, who claimed, "Reedy Creek collects about $105 million a year to provide services inside Disney World, essentially taxing itself. Once the special taxing district is dissolved, that special taxing power is defunct." Randolph further suggested, "the counties would also absorb between $1 billion and $1.7 billion in RCID bond debt."

Yet how would shutting down tax privileges for Disney increase taxes for other Reedy Creek residents? Why is Disney not responsible for these debts? These questions remain unanswered as the saga continues to develop.

Christina Pushaw, DeSantis' press secretary, tried to provide some clarity, tweeting on April 28: "Disney will pay its fair share of taxes. Floridians, including residents of Orange and Osceola Counties, will not be on the hook. Do not fall for another partisan political lie amplified by the media."

Exposing the Disney Agenda

Christopher Rufo, a fellow and director of the initiative on critical race theory (CRT) at the Manhattan Institute, reported in early April that "Disney executives organized an all-hands meeting, called the 'Reimagine Tomorrow Conversation Series,' and pledged to mobilize the entire corporation in service of the 'LGBTQIA+ community.'"

In the wake of Rufo's exposure of Disney's shameless "pro-queer" agenda, Disney stocks have plummeted and protests against the company are occurring at the theme parks.

The *Washington Examiner* reported that Disney has lost a whopping $50 billion since early March. "Disney's stock was down more than two percent on Friday [April 22] and by more than 8.5 percent over the past few days as Florida lawmakers work to punish the company for wading into the state's politics," read the report. Moreover, "the stock's market cap has declined by about $46.6 billion since March 1, just days before the company came out against the legislation."

Not surprisingly, Disney executives, both former and current, responded to the controversial Florida bill but remained silent about the company's "woke" campaign and its loss of capital. Bob Eiger, former head of Disney, tweeted that the Florida law was immoral. In an interview with anchor Chris Wallace of the now-defunct CNN+, Eiger said, "To me it [the bill] wasn't about politics. It is about what is right and what is wrong, and that just seemed wrong. It seemed potentially harmful to kids."

Notably, polling by Public Opinion Strategies found that two-thirds of voters believe it is inappropriate for teachers or school personnel to discuss gender identity with children in kindergarten through third grade.

But current Disney CEO Bob Chapek heard from those employees who want sexual politics jammed down children's throats. He wrote in a March 7 memo that "corporate statements do very little to change outcomes or minds," yet ultimately caved to employees of Disney who agreed with Eiger's statements and were spurred on by his stance.

"I pledge to be a better ally," said Chapek at a town hall with workers who pressured him to take on the Florida Legislature. "I know that our silence wasn't just about the bill in Florida, but about every time we didn't stand up. Your words have made a real impact on me. Your words have changed my mind."

DeSantis Is Moving Forward

If DeSantis has Disney pay taxes as does everyone else, the largest employer in the Sunshine State will no longer operate as its own independent country.

Reacting to the move, Walsh said, "I've never seen anything like it. To see people going on the offense is somewhat of a shock to the system. The Right isn't used to it."

With Disney stocks plunging — now sitting at just $115.77 per share (down from $145.70) — and protests ongoing, the "woke" kingdom is losing its magic. Yet DeSantis is moving forward, and the battle continues to rage. ■

State Trooper and Friend

Bailey Allen of Newark, Delaware, celebrated her fifth birthday with one of her favorite people: State Trooper Lieutenant Robert Jones.

Allen met Jones and other officers during a high-school basketball game in 2019, according to ABC 6, and struck up a friendship with them.

"Her eyes just lit up when she met them, and their eyes lit up. She walked over to them, and they just had a conversation and from there [they became] friends," recalled her mother, Dione Allen.

Jones has come to value the little girl so much that he helped to plan her fifth birthday party, which took place at the Delaware State Police Troop 2 Criminal Investigative Unit. With 15 children in attendance, the April 21 party included police motorcycles and mounted patrol. Surrounded by her state trooper friends, Bailey blew out her candles and shared that she hopes to work in law enforcement when she grows up.

Jones, who will be retiring soon, said he intends to continue to celebrate Bailey's birthdays alongside her.

"We're part of the community, and that's why it's important we're all part of one big family, so it's important we make a difference in people's lives," he commented.

Anonymous Donors

According to the *Tampa Bay Times*, Florida property owners have witnessed double-digit increases in their insurance premiums, prompting multiple businesses to either suspend their work or go out of business in recent years.

WFLA featured an April 4 story about panicked homeowners in Florida who were struggling with the rising costs. The story highlighted the plight of Lonnie Brown of Valrico, who said he was unsure he could afford his property insurance, which jumped by $2,000.

"I can't afford this," Brown said. "We barely get by with bills anyway and this comes up. We do not have the money to do that."

A March 24 WFLA story drew attention to Tad Buel, who has been receiving disability since 2004. Buel said his stomach was in knots when he saw the increased insurance rates.

But that WFLA story prompted two good Samaritans to come forward and sign checks to cover Brown's and Buel's increases for the year, Breitbart News reported.

Brown was so moved by the gesture that he told WFLA that he was "trying to maintain my composure."

Buel was shocked when he received a check sent to WFLA to cover his costs.

"I am without words," he said. "This dropping on my lap is overwhelming."

Bravery Exemplified

A Colorado deputy sheriff put himself in harm's way by using his vehicle to stop a wrong-way driver on a highway in this incredible story out of Adams County.

According to the Adams County Sheriff's Office, a vehicle was driving the wrong way on I-70 until the deputy allowed his police vehicle to be hit by the wrong-way driver to save others. The impact pushed both vehicles more than 140 feet and into the front of a semi-truck stopped at the scene, WVLT reported. Miraculously, the deputy and the driver were relatively unharmed.

"There is no doubt that without the deputy's quick action and bravery, several vehicles would have been struck at high speeds and lives would have been lost," the sheriff's office posted on Facebook.

The post was shared more than 1,000 times, earning more than 3,000 likes and more than 450 comments, most of which included words of appreciation for the deputy's brave actions.

Donate, Then Dominate

Steve Wilson of Westchester, New York, wanted to prove that organ donation was not only an invaluable sacrifice but also one that would not impair the donor from engaging in adventure, so he donated his kidney to a stranger and then embarked on climbing Mount Kilamanjaro.

Wilson was preparing for a bike ride in 2019 when he read a social-media post about his friend's daughter, a high-school junior who received a life-saving kidney donation from a stranger.

"I became emotional. I just thought that is the coolest thing," said Wilson. "I took a long bike ride thinking that feeling would go away, and I kept thinking, 'I would love to do something like that one day.'"

Wilson eventually fulfilled his desire to donate his kidney. He has no idea who received it and likely never will, he told CBS News, but he was just happy to change somebody's life.

Wilson was hopeful that his story would inspire others to do something similar, and, with the intent to prove that organ donation is not too burdensome, he teamed up with fellow living donors to embark on summiting Mount Kilamanjaro in Tanzania.

"I think a lot more than one person will consider donating a kidney," he said. "Because so many people aren't aware that you can actually donate a kidney, that you only need one to live. Many people are born with one, and most people probably don't even know that."

Wilson wanted to prove that kidney donation takes just two weeks of your life for the operation and recovery, leaving plenty of time to go back to setting even more difficult personal goals and reaching them.

CBS News reported that the team reached the summit on March 10, World Kidney Day.

Wilson reported that his donation inspired at least one friend to consider becoming a living donor, and he also learned that his donation inspired a chain reaction of giving. The person who was originally going to donate a kidney to Wilson's recipient proved to be incompatible, but decided to donate to somebody else. That started a chain in which three people received kidneys, according to Wilson.

Proving his point, he emphasized that the chain reaction of giving resulted in life-saving surgery for three people, and nothing more than "a two-week inconvenience for me." ■

— Raven Clabough

Checkmate

How Bobby Fischer Beat the Soviets

Bobby Fischer's defeat of world chess champion Boris Spassky not only showed that the Soviets could be defeated in a game they had long dominated, but also caused interest in chess to surge in America.

by Steve Byas

It was 50 years ago this summer that U.S. chess player Bobby Fischer concluded the greatest two-year run in the history of world chess, handing the socialist system of the Soviet Union one of its greatest defeats in the Cold War.

Fischer went to Reykjavik, Iceland, in July of 1972 and took the world chess championship away from Soviet player Boris Spassky. He was the first American to win the title (and so far the only one), and the first non-Soviet to win the title since the Second World War. While some point to the victory of the American hockey team in the 1980 Olympics over the Soviet team as the greatest sports victory for America during the Cold War era, the reality is that to the Soviets, having the chess title taken away was a greater disaster.

After Alexander Alekhine died in 1948 while reigning as world chess champion, an international tournament was held to establish a new champion. It was won by Mikhail Botvinnik, and he was followed by a string of other Soviet chess grandmasters. Alekhine was also Russian, but he detested communism and defected to France after the Bolshevik Revolution. Alekhine was found dead, with his head on his chess board, and there has been speculation over the years whether KGB agents might have had something to do with it.

Regardless, Soviet chess hegemony was trumpeted as an example of the superiority of the socialist system over decadent capitalism. While Soviet grandmasters were supported by the state, the top American players had to have other jobs to put food on the table and a roof over their heads.

Bobby Fischer had no support from his government, of course, and he lived a very spartan existence in the years leading up to his remarkable run to the world chess championship. To the Soviets, Fischer was the embodiment of the individualist so hated by the collectivist system of Soviet communism.

How did Fischer manage to take on the Soviet chess empire and crush it, culminating with a 12.5 to 8.5 victory over the best they had — Boris Spassky?

AP Images

Fischer was not a prodigy, although he won the U.S. chess championship for the first time at age 14. While he learned the game at the young age of six, it was not until he was about 12 years old that he became a top-rated chess player in the United States. Samuel Reshevsky, the best player in America before Fischer's emergence in 1956, *was* a prodigy, learning to play chess at two, and giving simultaneous exhibitions (playing several opponents at the same time, moving from board to board) at *six*.

Fischer's development was much slower. Born in Chicago on

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March 9, 1943, Fischer learned to play when he was six, when his sister Joan (then 11) purchased a chess set from a nearby candy store. He enjoyed playing, but was only an occasional player for the next year. But then he began to do little else but play with his chess set, playing both sides of the board (his sister could no longer offer much competition).

Little Bobby was spending so much time alone with his chess set that his mother sent a postcard to the chess column of the *Brooklyn Eagle* newspaper (where they were then living) in late 1950, asking if they knew any boys his age he could play chess with. This led to Fischer going to an exhibition by chess master Max Pavey. Fischer lost quickly, but Carmine Nigro, president of the Brooklyn Chess Club, invited Bobby to join the club.

"Mr. Nigro [an expert, which is right below master level] was possibly not the best player in the world," Fischer later recalled, "but he was a very good teacher. I went to the Brooklyn Chess Club practically every Friday night." Nigro gave Fischer personal lessons at the rate of a dollar an hour. "I'm sure he wasn't interested in the dollar, but this was his way of making sure I took the lessons seriously."

He "Just Got Good"

After a slow improvement over the next few years, by 1954 his play had made a dramatic improvement of several hundred rating points in less than two years. When asked what he did to make such an improvement, Fischer shrugged, "I just got good."

He did get "good," but it was because of his almost single-minded devotion to getting good. He was rarely seen without a pocket chess set or not reading chess literature. He taught himself Russian — because he knew the Russian chess players were the best — so he could read their chess magazines and books. His IQ was tested at Erasmus High School at 188, but he took little interest in school, and dropped out before graduating.

He was the youngest ever U.S. junior champion in 1956, but it was his victory over international chess master Donald Byrne — when Fischer was only 13 years old — in a game that has been dubbed "the game of the century" that brought Fischer national, and even international, attention. The spectacular victory, with a bold queen sacrifice, was, according to Soviet grandmaster Yuri Averbakh, the first time the Soviets became "concerned" about the up-and-coming American.

AP Images

Getting attention: Fischer played on even terms with the best of the Soviet players, including world champion Tigran Petrosian, even as a youth. By the time he was 13 years old, the Soviets were concerned about his ability.

Fischer won the first of several U.S. championships in 1958 at age 14. This victory entitled him to play in the Interzonal tournament in Yugoslavia. The Interzonal tournament was composed of the strongest players in the world, with the top six finishers entered into the Candidates Tournament, which would determine who would challenge the world chess champion in 1960. Fischer finished fifth, and fifth again in the Candidates Tournament the next year.

It was about this time that Fischer's mother moved to California out of their Brooklyn apartment. While his mother should be lauded for the support she gave to her son's chess aspirations, tensions had been building between them over his mother's left-wing political views. Regina Fischer was a Polish Jew who became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1926. She went to Berlin to study, where she met and married Gerhardt Fischer. They moved to Moscow in 1933, as they were both enamored with what they believed to be the "workers' paradise."

She eventually separated from her husband and returned to America, and was a member of the U.S. Communist Party. The FBI suspected she was a Soviet spy. She was involved in various left-wing political causes, which embarrassed and angered young Bobby. Their arguments grew more frequent until she moved out.

After his mother left, Bobby spent most of each day studying chess, determined to become a professional and the world champion. In 1962, he finished first in the Interzonal in Stockholm, winning a spot in the Candidates Tournament in Curaçao (in the Dutch West Indies). Fischer expected to win the Candidates Tournament and play Mikhail Botvinnik for the world title in 1963, but instead finished fourth behind three Russians (including Tigran Petrosian, who defeated Botvinnik the next year).

Fischer charged in *Sports Illustrated* that the Russians had colluded against him, agreeing to quick draws with each other and devoting their energy into getting wins against him. "Russian control of chess has reached a point where there can be no honest competition."

At the time, many, even in American chess, considered this simply sour grapes on Fischer's part, but Soviet grandmaster Viktor Korchnoi (who defected from the

Soviet Union in 1976) confirmed Fischer's accusations. Fischer's complaints led to the use of knock-out elimination candidate matches instead of a tournament for the next cycle.

Fischer began to complain about other things, as well, including the lighting at tournaments and the crowds, which he considered both too close and too noisy. He also joined the World Wide Church of God, which observed the Sabbath, and was allowed to not play on Saturday.

His behavior was becoming more erratic, and after winning the U.S. championship in 1963 with a perfect 11-0 score (unprecedented), he mysteriously dropped out of competitive chess for a year and a half, skipping the Interzonal in 1964. Fischer returned to play — by Telex — in the Capablanca Memorial in Cuba in 1965 (Cuban Jose Capablanca was world champion in the 1920s), but he almost pulled out when Cuban Communist dictator Fidel Castro tried to use his participation as a propaganda victory.

In January 1966, Fischer won the U.S. title again, qualifying for the 1967 Interzonal in Sousse, Tunisia. Fischer was leading the tournament when he failed to show up for a game — which was forfeited — before showing up five minutes before he would have forfeited against fellow American Reshevsky, a game he won. He then demanded that the game he had lost by forfeit to Soviet Aivar Gipslis be played. When the tournament officials refused, Fischer withdrew from the tournament, and "retired" from chess for another two years.

Fischer vs. the Soviet School of Chess

There is little doubt that the Soviets were happy to see Fischer leave Sousse, and leave chess, probably hoping his retirement was permanent. They certainly considered the brash American as the biggest threat to their continued dominance of world chess. In the words of Alexandr Kotov in his book *The Soviet School of Chess*, "Chess provides indisputable proof of the superiority of socialist culture over the declining cultures of capitalist societies."

In the Soviet Union, chess stars were lauded and privileged. Their use of chess to advance the assertion that it demonstrated the superiority of their collectivist system went back to the years after the Bolshevik Revolution. Nikolai Krylenko, a close confidant of Soviet dictator Vladimir Lenin, was the prosecutor in the revolutionary tribunals (before he was executed himself in 1938). He was also the chairman of the Chess Section of the Supreme Council for Physical Education, and even developed a five-year plan for Soviet chess.

Unfortunately for the Soviets, Fischer's retirement was *not* permanent. He returned to competitive chess in 1970, and began a remarkable string of victories that would take him to Reykjavik and his victory over Spassky in 1972.

What brought Fischer out of retirement was an invitation to play in the 1970 USSR vs. the Rest of the World event. The Soviets had never lost one of these events during their long domination of world chess, but there was hope among some that the rest of the world was catching up. For example, Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen had been enjoying tremendous success in recent years.

But any hope of victory was centered on luring Fischer to play. Under the international ratings system known as ELO, Fischer was the highest-ranked player available, and the organizers logically placed him on first board. Larsen, however, objected, arguing that Fischer's extended inactivity, combined with the "Great Dane's" recent successes, should place Larsen on first board instead.

Naturally, the organizers for the Rest of the World team were despondent, thinking that Fischer would never go for being put on second board. But to their surprise, Fischer said, "Larsen's got a point."

Of course, world champion Boris Spassky was on first board, and former champion Tigran Petrosian was the Soviet second board. Fischer defeated Petrosian, and the Rest of the World team fell only one point short of tying the Soviets. As the song went, "The times they are a changing."

Fischer went on to win two strong chess tournaments by such margins that many in the United States were convinced that, given the opportunity, he would win the world title in this cycle. The problem was that Fischer had not participated in the U.S. championship, which was necessary to be included in the Palma de Mallorca Interzonal, which in turn would give him the opportunity to become one of the candidates to challenge Spassky in 1972.

AP Images

Moneymaker: Like many grandmaster chess players, Fischer would earn some money by playing simultaneous exhibitions against several amateur players.

Chasing the World Title

The top three players from the U.S. championship had earned spots in the Interzonal, and the third-place finisher, Pal Benko, offered to give up his spot for

Fischer if the rest of the contestants below him would do likewise. They did, and Fischer was given a spot in the Interzonal, where he was one of 24 players vying for the six available spots in the eight-player Candidates matches. (Petrosian and Korchnoi had already qualified; Petrosian was the immediate past champion, and Korchnoi had made it to the finals of the 1968 matches before losing to Spassky).

Fischer started slowly (for him), mixing victories with some draws, and finally, a loss to Larsen. While winning a spot in the Candidates was still probable, finishing first was now in doubt. But then, Fischer went on his historic surge of victories, mowing down seven opponents in a row to finish the tournament winning by three and a half points over Larsen, who placed second.

Fischer's first opponent in the Candidates matches was Soviet Mark Taimanov, who was also an accomplished concert pianist. Fischer was certainly favored to win the match, but Taimanov was a strong grandmaster and a former champion of the Soviet Union. No one predicted that Fischer would annihilate Taimanov 6-0 in the 10-game match.

For those who dwell on Fischer's alleged lack of concern for others, he was actually quite gracious in his stunning victory. "The 6-0 result was too high," he said after it was over. "Taimanov had a winning position in the third game, where he employed a successful novelty, and the advantage in the first and fifth game."

In his book *I Was a Victim of Bobby Fischer*, Taimanov recalled the horrible blunder that cost him the fifth game. After Taimanov made the losing move, Fischer softly said, "I'm sorry," upon making his own move that ended that game with yet another Fischer win.

But Taimanov's victimization did not end with his shellacking by Fischer. Taimanov recalled that, after the match, "I suddenly came under the fire of merciless, destructive criticism from the authorities at all levels, from the Central Committee of the Communist Party to local party cells." He was stripped of his title of "Honored Master of Sport," removed from the USSR team, and forbidden to travel outside the Soviet Union to participate in chess tournaments for two years. He was even forbidden to write chess articles or give concerts. "In short, it was a harsh 'civil execution.'"

When Taimanov arrived back at the Moscow airport, his personal luggage was searched, and authorities found a copy of a book written by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. While it was not technically illegal to possess the book, this was used to question his loyalty to the Soviet system. It led to the cruel joke that Solzhenitsyn was arrested for possessing Taimanov's book on the Nimzo-Indian Defense chess opening.

Taimanov was called before the Ministry of Sport to answer for losing to Fischer, an act some authorities said they suspected was "political." Other Soviet grandmasters were in the room, including Petrosian and Spassky, who asked, "When we all lose to Fischer, will all of us be dragged on the carpet?"

Fischer's next opponent was the next-best player outside the Soviet Union, Bent Larsen, who had been the only player to defeat Fischer at the Interzonal. But he fared no better than Taimanov, also losing 6-0. Taimanov said that Larsen's 6-0 defeat softened the animosity against him inside the Soviet Union, as it was hard to argue that the Great Dane was making some sort of political statement in getting routed by Fischer.

Next up was the former champion Tigran Petrosian. Fischer had now won 19 games in a row against grandmasters of the highest caliber. It was a feat unmatched then, and now, in the history of chess. Various comparisons have been given to explain to non-chess players of its significance. It would be like a tennis player winning Wimbledon without losing a single game.

Inside the Soviet Union, there was hope, but not expectation, that Petrosian could stop the Fischer steamroller. In fact, Fischer proceeded to win the first game, bringing his incredible winning streak to 20 games in a row.

Finally, in the second game, Fischer lost. He was visibly ill, with a heavy cold, but refused to take a medical break, which he was entitled to do. Fischer had caused high blood pressure and other such ailments over the years in his opponents, who had taken medical breaks, but Fischer never had.

How would Fischer react to his first defeat in 21 games? The next three games

AP Images

Renewed interest: The 1972 world chess championship match between Fischer and Spassky created an unprecedented boom in interest in the game in the United States. The U.S. Chess Federation quadrupled its membership during the months after Fischer won the world championship.

were draws, and hope was rising inside the Soviet chess empire. But then, Fischer reeled off four wins in a row to win the scheduled 12-game match by 6.5 to 2.5.

The Queen's Gambit

Now, only champion Boris Spassky stood between Fischer and the world championship. Spassky was hardly a doctrinaire communist, and he had rebuffed offers to join the Communist Party. When he was a teen, at the World Student Team Championship, he had asked one of the chaperones if it was true that Lenin, the first dictator of the Soviet Union, had died of syphilis. There was some talk of referring his remarks to the authorities, but they reasoned he was just a brash kid who would learn.

Spassky was confident going into the match, and expected to win against Fischer, whom he had presumed would be his challenger since at least the spring of 1971. Reykjavik, Iceland, was chosen as the site for the match, and Fischer trained in isolation for the match, poring over vast amounts of chess literature provided for him by international master Ken Smith of Dallas, a chess publisher.

Spassky, of course, had any trainers he wanted, and the full backing of all authorities inside the Soviet Union.

The winner of the match would receive $78,125, and the loser $46,875, prize money unheard of in professional chess before that time. But it was not enough for Fischer, who demanded 30 percent of the gate receipts (about $250,000). The Icelandic authorities balked, however, as they were counting on the full receipts to fund the match itself.

Fischer refused to board a plane for Iceland until his demands were met. Even Henry Kissinger, then secretary of state for President Richard Nixon, put in a call to Fischer, pleading with him to play, telling him, "This is the worst player in the world calling the best player in the world."

English businessman James Slater gave $125,000 of his own money to sweeten the prize pot, and Fischer finally relented. At the press conference in Reykjavik, Fischer apologized for being late, and applauded Spassky for waiting for him. This was no small gesture on Spassky's part, as the Central Committee of the Communist Party had pressured Spassky to take the opportunity to leave Iceland with his title intact.

AP Images

Outlawed: After a 20-year absence from tournament chess, Fischer emerged from retirement in 1992 to play a match against Spassky in Yugoslavia. The United Nations had barred international economic travel to that nation, and the U.S. government issued a warrant for his arrest. Fischer was never able to return to the United States, and eventually died in Iceland.

Finally, the first game began on July 11, with Spassky getting the white pieces and the first move. After 28 moves, the Nimzo-Indian that Fischer used to defend had resulted in a drawish position. Spassky was startled when Fischer made a move that lost him a bishop, and eventually the game. Fischer blamed the cameras, which were distracting him with a whirring sound, and the cameramen moving around. He also said there were too many noises from the spectators in the playing hall.

He refused to play the second game unless changes were made. Chester Fox, who had the contract to film the match, agreed to withdraw the cameras for the second game, but when Fischer was 40 minutes late, he insisted that the clock be reset and restarted. The match referee, Lothar Schmid, refused, noting that Spassky had been waiting for 40 minutes and that "rules are rules."

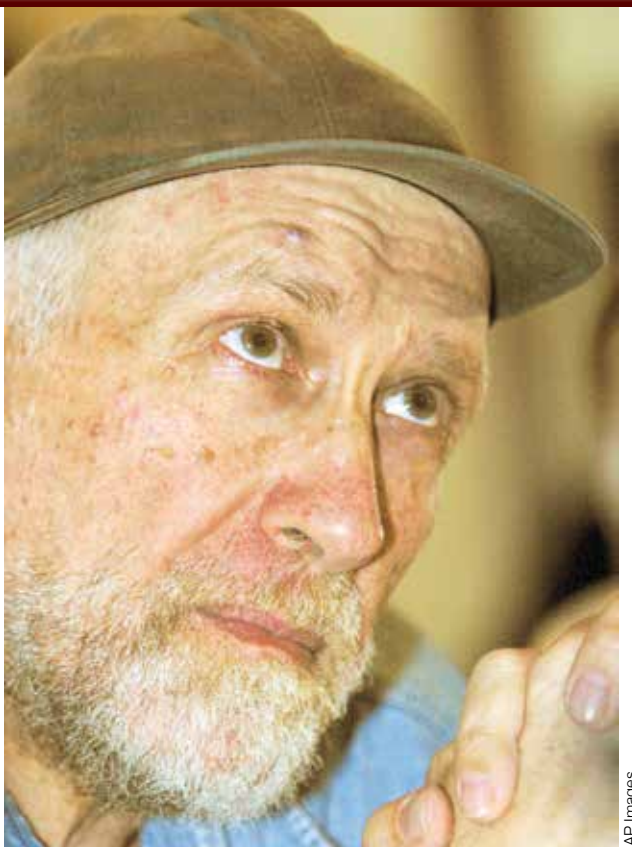
The second game went to Spassky by forfeit, and it was the general consensus that Fischer would withdraw from the match in protest. But he did not, and he won the third game, which had been moved to a back room. Spassky refused to play the fourth game in the back room, insisting that street noise was even worse. Surprisingly, Fischer played the fourth game, which ended in a draw. Then Fischer won the fifth game, evening the match score.

The sixth game is considered one of the finest games ever played, as Fischer played an opening he had never played in his entire chess career — the Queen's Gambit. Throughout his career, he had opened with the King's pawn, rather than the Queen's pawn. Ironically, *Chess Life and Review*, before the match, had used a cartoon on its front page depicting Spassky preparing for King pawn openings only. One of his trainers asked, "But what if he doesn't play P-K4?"

Fischer now had the lead in the match, and only lost one more game, finally winning 12.5 to 8.5. Throwing out the forfeit in game two, a five-game win over the reigning world champion capped a remarkable and unprecedented run to the world championship. Future world champion Garry Kasparov later commented it was the greatest achievement in chess history — that no champion had

ever been so much better than his contemporaries.

U.S. chess boomed in the aftermath of Fischer's triumph. For years, the U.S. Chess Federation (USCF) had survived with fewer than 10,000 members and the financial support of wealthy donors such as candy maker Robert Welch, a member of USCF's executive committee. (Welch is more famous for launching the anti-communist and constitutionalist John Birch Society, the parent organization of *The New American* magazine.) USCF membership soared to over 60,000 in just a few months, and tournaments had participant numbers never seen before.



AP Images

The end: Fischer's last years were lost in a downward spiral of mental illness, but his mind remained creative. He invented a new chess clock, now commonly used in tournament chess. He is buried in a small Christian cemetery in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Fischer's Last Years

But what would Fischer do next? Although he boasted he would be an active champion, he also told Johnny Carson on the *Tonight Show* that he would be careful not to play too much and give away his "tricks." Carson knew nothing about chess, but he was a skillful interviewer, and he asked Fischer a question that would lead to an answer that might explain Fischer's mysterious disappearance from competitive chess.

"What do you do now?" Carson asked. Fischer looked uncomfortable when he answered, "This is the problem. How to top it."

He added, "I woke up the day after … different … like something had been taken out of me."

Clearly, Fischer's myopic focus since his early teen years had been to become the world champion, and now he had achieved it. What more did he have to prove? What else was there to accomplish?

He refused to defend his title in 1975 against the Soviets' new star, Anatoly Karpov, a self-proclaimed and dedicated Marxist. Fischer insisted that the match rules be changed. Instead of a 24-game match, in which draws would count as a half-point, as had been done for many years, he told the world chess federation that he wanted a match only after one player had 10 wins. More amazingly, he wanted to retain his title if the match reached nine games to nine.

Fischer was stripped of his title, which went to Karpov, who eventually lost it to Kasparov. Kasparov believed that Fischer would have defeated Karpov in 1975, but is not sure about Fischer's ability to regain the title in later years.

For the next several years, Fischer lived off meager royalties from his chess books, especially *My Sixty Memorable Games*, and the charity of others. Despite some arguing that Fischer was no longer a top chess player, he stayed at the home of grandmaster Peter Biyiasas and his chess-playing wife, Ruth Haring, in San Francisco in 1981, and played Biyiasas in speed games during his two-month stay. He left and later returned for two more months.

Fischer won 17 consecutive games against Biyiasas. "He was too good. There was no use playing him.… I was getting beaten, and it wasn't clear to me why.… The most depressing thing about it is that I wasn't even getting out of the middle game to an endgame," Biyiasas remarked.

To the astonishment of the world, Fischer came out of retirement in 1992 to play a match with Boris Spassky, who had defected to France. While it is unclear exactly why Fischer ended his isolation after 20 years, the purse of $5 million (two-thirds to go to the winner) no doubt had something to do with it. Fischer won the match 10 games to five.

After the second Spassky match, Fischer went into seclusion again. Part of the reason for his second isolation was that the match was held in Yugoslavia, then under UN sanctions. The Bush administration issued an executive order, based on the UN sanctions, that travel to Yugoslavia was illegal. Exactly how a president can make a law with an executive order based on UN sanctions is not clear, but a warrant was issued for Fischer's arrest and he could not return to America. Eventually, he settled in the nation of his greatest triumph, Iceland.

In his last years, he is believed to have descended into a period of mental illness, ranting about Jews and the like (even though he was of Jewish ancestry himself).

Despite all of this, his mind remained creative, and he developed a new type of chess clock, now used in tournaments all over the world. Instead of an absolute time limit, a player receives extra time for each move made. This is believed to have increased the quality of endgame play, previously often marked by wild time scrambles.

Fischer was not allowed to come back to America for the funerals of either his mother or his sister. He remained in Iceland, where he died in January 2008 of kidney failure at age 64. His condition was considered treatable, but he refused surgery.

His body is now in a small Christian cemetery in Iceland, but his legacy lives on. Chess players still praise the genius of Bobby Fischer — not only in America, but even in the nation he "conquered" in 1972, Russia. ■

Domestic Disturbance Turns Deadly

A CBS affiliate in Minnesota reported on April 4 about a shooting that occurred after a man broke in to his ex-girlfriend's St. Paul home. Police investigators say 33-year-old Kaleef L. Barnes allegedly kicked in the front door of the house and was threatening his ex-girlfriend, who was inside. The woman's 56-year-old father, who is the owner of the house, was armed and shot Barnes multiple times after Barnes entered the house through the broken-down door.

The father dialed 911 and reported both the break-in and the shooting, and waited outside for police to arrive. Paramedics soon arrived on the scene and declared the suspect dead. The father was taken into custody for questioning and later released.

The investigation is still ongoing, but due to it appearing that Barnes broke in to the house and was a trespassing intruder threatening violence against one of the occupants, it is likely the father's shooting will be deemed justified under a state law that permits the "justifiable taking of life … when … preventing the commission of a felony in the actor's place of abode."

Repeat Offender Meets His End

The *Citrus County Chronicle* in Florida reported on April 5 about an intruder who was shot after forcing his way into a woman's house and getting into a physical altercation with another one of the home's occupants.

The suspect, 36-year-old Kyle Davis, was shot to death. Police investigators say that Davis physically assaulted a woman, who retreated to her home. Once inside the house, the beaten woman told the other resident about what happened. Davis then broke in to the home and started physically fighting with the woman's roommate, who then armed himself and shot Davis.

The Citrus County Sheriff's Office arrived on the scene and discovered Davis' lifeless body in the house. The investigation is ongoing, but the sheriff's department said it is likely to be ruled a justifiable homicide.

Another wild twist to this story is that the deceased suspect was imprisoned more than a decade ago for soliciting another criminal to commit first-degree murder against his then-estranged wife. Davis was in a county jail in North Carolina after being arrested for breaking in to his wife's house and attacking her multiple times. According to court records, Davis asked another inmate in the county jail to kill his wife and the four-year-old boy who lived with her at the time. Police did confirm that the woman Davis assaulted on April 2 was not the same woman from the earlier crimes, and that she received medical treatment for the injuries that Davis inflicted.

Shoot Burglars to "Save Taxpayers' Money"

A county sheriff in Santa Rosa County in northwest Florida made some remarks to the press that quickly went viral due to their brutal honesty. WKRG.com reported on April 21 about the wild story involving 32-year-old Brandon Harris, who fled from police by breaking in to and trespassing through multiple homes.

Santa Rosa County Sheriff Bob Johnson said that Harris had warrants out for his arrest, and to avoid arrest he was "jumping fences and breaking into houses as he goes." As deputies broke in to the bedroom where Harris was barricaded, Harris jumped out of a window and continued to flee, but was eventually caught and arrested by police.

Harris was wanted for parole violations and aggravated assault, among other charges, but after this incident he is facing seven new charges related to burglary and attempted larceny. During the investigation, Sheriff Johnson said, police determined that one of the homeowners actually shot at Harris but missed him. Sheriff Johnson asked the homeowner who fired the shot to come forward, saying that the person won't face any charges. "We don't know what homeowner — which homeowner — shot at him. I guess they think they did something wrong, which they did not…. If somebody's breaking into your house, you're more than welcome to shoot them in Santa Rosa County, and we prefer that you do actually. Whoever that was, you're not in trouble. Come see us. We have a gun safety class we put on every other Saturday. If you take that, you'll shoot a lot better, and hopefully, you'll save taxpayers' money," Sheriff Johnson said.

Harris is being held in the Santa Rosa County jail without bond for his past crimes, and bond for his new crimes was set at more than $150,000.

Democrat Sues Biden Administration Over Gun Policy

In a unique story out of Florida, NBC News reported on April 20 that state Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried filed a lawsuit against a federal requirement that bans medical marijuana users from buying guns or maintaining concealed-carry permits. Fried — who is running in the Democratic primary to challenge Ron DeSantis for Florida governor — is the only Democratic statewide politician, and her lawsuit appears to be straddling the fence between the political Right and Left to gain favor with the voters on populist issues.

The lawsuit is directed at a federal form that asks whether the gun buyer is a user of drugs and explicitly states that marijuana is illegal under federal law. Florida permits marijuana use for medicinal purposes, but the way the federal form is written, it forces a user to answer "yes," which will deny the gun purchase, or state "no," which could lead to imprisonment for making a false statement on a federal form.

If the suit is successful, it might have an impact in other states that have legalized medical marijuana or recreational marijuana use. Fried said in a statement to NBC News that "medical marijuana is legal. Guns are legal. This is all about people's rights.… And I don't care who I have to sue to fight for their freedom." ■

— Patrick Krey

THE REVIEW

Communist China's Horrifying Dream

by William P. Hoar

Bully of Asia: Why China's Dream is the New Threat to World Order, by Steven W. Mosher, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2017 (first trade paperback edition, 2022), 400 pages, paperback.

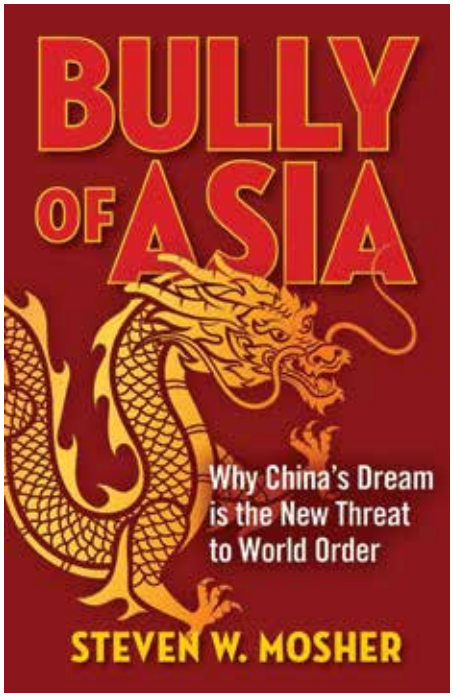
If the past really is prologue, a dark future looms. It has already occurred in China. The ultimate goal, under Chinese Communist Party boss Xi Jinping, as well as his party predecessors and historical antecedents, is what Xi calls the "China Dream." China's manifest destiny, as explained by author Steven Mosher, is to usher in "a new world order, which it calls the World of Great Harmony."

It comes with a fist. Or, as George Orwell famously put it, "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — forever."

Mosher maintains that what he termed a "threat" in the book's first hardcover edition is now a reality. He offers considerable evidence to back up the contention.

Bloody Backstory

And there's also plenty of history presented by China authority Mosher — to include actions of emperor Qin Shihuang, the archetypical Oriental despot. Of Qin, Mosher notes, "More than two millennia before George Orwell coined the term, ancient China endured the world's first Big Brother."



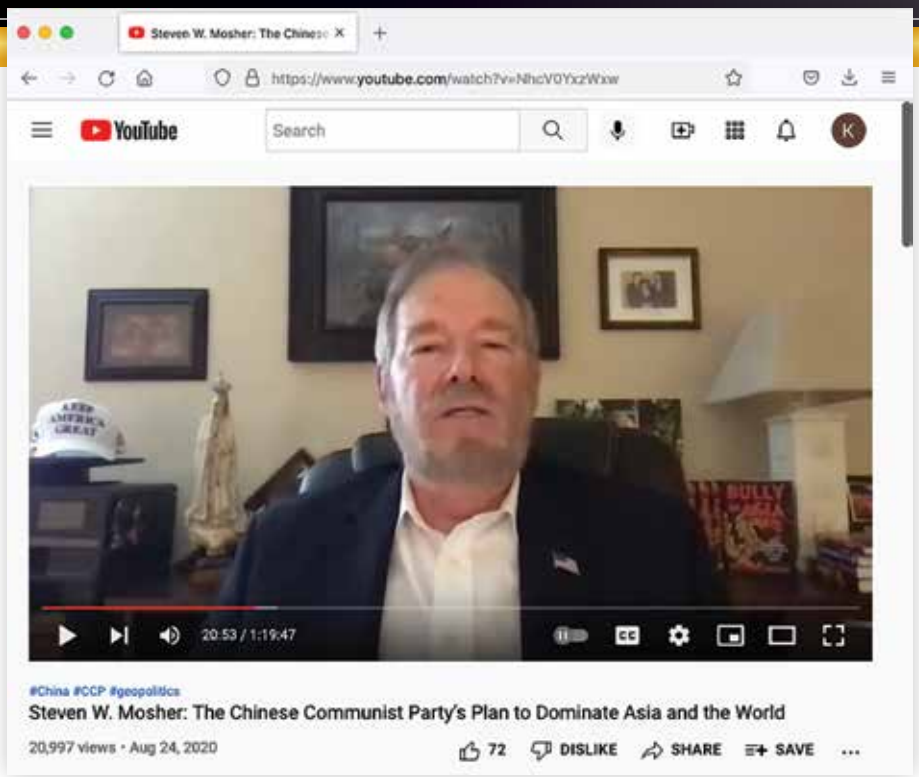
Indeed, to move to more recent years, Chairman Mao Tse-tung was not fond of being likened to Qin. Mosher quotes that longtime communist leader at the Eighth Party Congress in May 1958 saying:

> Emperor Qin Shihuang was not that outstanding. He only buried alive 460 Confucian scholars. We buried 460 *thousand* Confucian scholars. [Some] have accused us of being Emperor Qin Shihuang. That is not true. We are a hundred times worse than Emperor Qin. To the charge of being like Emperor Qin, of being a dictator, we plead guilty. But you have not said nearly enough, for often we have to go further. [Emphasis in original.]

Jump to the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, when then-leader Deng Xiaoping's military killed thousands of unarmed demonstrators by rolling them over with tanks and firing upon them with automatic weapons. When U.S. Secretary of State James Baker ventured during a meeting with Premier Li Peng to call this a "tragedy," that communist leader showed the Reds' true color. As quoted in *Bully of Asia*, Li disputed that characteristic vehemently, insisting that the actions were "a good thing. We do not regard them as a tragedy."

Familiar Subject

The author of a dozen books, most with a Chinese theme, Mosher also serves as president of the Population Research Institute (PRI, which, among other activities, exposes human-rights abuses committed in population-control programs). In 1979, he was the first American social scientist to visit mainland China. He was, according to the PRI, invited there by the Chinese government and had access to government documents, and witnessed



women being forced to have abortions under the nation's new "one-child policy." He was subsequently expelled from China and denied his Ph.D. at Stanford University — which made headlines at the time. Mosher is not now, one gathers, on Beijing's list of favorites.

In an earlier book (*China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality*, 1990), Mosher described the media's fawning over President Nixon's opening to Communist China. Beijing tightly controlled the "exploring" of China by the press. During the week of Nixon's visit, as Mosher recounted, 87 members of the press corps produced a "blizzard" of accounts of life in China. Yet, "Everything was off-limits except a carefully vetted list of twenty-seven outings."

Just two years earlier (as Mosher also pointed out in that 1990 volume), Mao was spewing his typical hatred of the United States, saying (among other charges), "While massacring the people in other countries, U.S. imperialism is slaughtering the white and black people in its own country. Nixon's fascist atrocities have kindled the raging flames of the revolutionary mass movement in the United States. The Chinese people firmly support the revolutionary struggle of the American people."

That is, until ordered otherwise. Around three months before the Nixon trip, Mosher noted, "official party documents had been circulated throughout China to inform the masses that the decade-long policy of targeting 'American imperialism' as China's number one enemy was about to be scrapped."

Unmasking Biowarfare

The original *Bully of Asia* ended at the beginning of the Trump administration. There's no "afterword" in the book under review, but the new preface (dated January 2022) addresses more current events. It focuses on Chinese information warfare and, in particular, the coronavirus onslaught. Mosher terms this China's "stealth biological weapons attack on the American homeland in late 2019 and early 2020." He does not, as you see, pull punches.

These days, the American mass media still seems to be following instructions (as it generally did during the Nixon trip). When it is expedient politically, negative news about China tends to be slanted if not scarce. *Bully of Asia* is a blunt exception, with Mosher charging Beijing with "launching the biowarfare equivalent of 9/11."

In contrast, many in the media (and social media) took Beijing's side after Mosher wrote a related Covid piece in February 2020 in the *New York Post*. That article (as recounted in his book) listed some of the evidence then available that "points to SARS-CoV-2 research being carried out at the Wuhan Institute of Virology." The Biden-Harris administration and its allies in the press echo chamber didn't want to hear that.

As time went on, there was even more evidence pointing at Beijing, as Mosher describes in his book (and as he did in another *New York Post* piece in 2021).

Mosher quotes Dr. David Asher, who headed the State Department's task force investigating the origins of Covid-19 for the Trump administration, and who believes not only that the virus escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, but also that it was the result of bioweapons research. "The Wuhan Institute of Virology is not the National Institute of Health," commented Asher. "It was operating a secret, classified program. In my view, and I'm just one person, my view is it was a biological weapons program."

Actions of a Murderous Regime

Bully of Asia is much more than a diatribe making a case about the mainstream media being hostile to truth. After all, there are media critics of Beijing who have pointed at the personality cult that has been cultivated by President Xi Jinping, his brutal authoritarianism, purging of rivals, and locking up of a million or so Uyghurs. What Mosher does well is to put this in proper perspective, with historical details.

Most of the book is not about the current dictator but the country's past, during the last century and well before that. In Mosher's view, China "long ago invented totalitarianism — the total subjugation of the individual to the state"; has leaders that "govern an ethnic-based empire and tout the racial superiority of their race over all others"; and "narcissistically 'dreams' of a world under its hegemony."

Having laid out his facts, Mosher asks rhetorically:

> Is it really that surprising that the same murderous regime that has already engaged in forced abortion and sterilization, forced organ harvesting, and genocide would also be developing deadly bioweapons to

> release on the United States and the world? China had both the intention and the capability to take a harmless bat virus, turn it into a deadly pathogen, and then release it upon the world. And the evidence suggests that it did just that.

Adding more probability to that suggestion, Mosher points to a Chinese book that "recently fell into the hands" of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) that further confirms that military scientists have been focused on what they call the "new era of genetic weapons" since at least 2015. A top ASPI official called the document the closest thing to a "smoking gun as we've got."

Dressing Up History

Separate chapters in *Bully of Asia* focus on Mao; "Diminutive Hegemon" Deng Xiaoping; Jiang Zemin, the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party between 1989 and 2002; and there is one entitled "Move Over, Great Helmsman, 'Big Daddy' Xi is Here." The current leader seemingly sees himself as a resurrected Mao. The first volume of Xi's collected speeches, notes Mosher, even has a cover that "bears an uncanny, and surely not accidental, resemblance to the cover of Mao's collected works."

As strong as this book is in most regards, we part company in some areas. Here's one: In discussing the island of Taiwan after the Korean War armistice, Mosher briefly mentions that the offshore Dazhen (also Dachen or Tachen) islands were abandoned to the Chinese Communists, acknowledging President Eisenhower's leaning on Nationalist (anti-communist) leader Chiang Kai-shek.

Yet, just two pages later, Mosher says that eventually the "Taiwan Strait crisis passed. The Eisenhower-Dulles [the latter being John Foster Dulles, the U.S. secretary of state under Dwight Eisenhower] policy of facing down Communist aggression wherever it might appear, along with the resolve of the Nationalist government, had prevailed." The abject surrender of the Dazhen chain vanishes, and the author's rosy-eyed glasses get a bit foggy.

This was, at the time, not an obscure news blip. Here's additional context, with an excerpt from *Taiwan's Offshore Islands: Pathway or Barrier?* by Bruce A. Elleman (Naval War College Press, 2019), which points out that, for example, "The Australians compared the loss of the Dachens … to the 1938-39 fall of Czechoslovakia." Asked by Canada what further concessions Chiang could be asked to make, John Foster Dulles admitted he didn't "know whether we could make him take any more bitter medicine at this time without disastrous consequences."

As the war college publication acknowledges, the "evacuation of the Dachens was a massive undertaking. Between February 7 and 11, 1955, the U.S. Navy used a total of 132 ships and four hundred aircraft to evacuate 14,500 civilians, ten thousand Nationalist troops, and approximately four thousand guerrilla fighters, along with over forty thousand tons of military equipment and supplies." After the evacuation, "the flag of the Republic of China was lowered in the Dachen Islands by Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son." And, as Bruce Elleman puts it, "The decision to evacuate the Dachens gravely undermined Nationalist morale."

Here is another time (among others) in which Eisenhower and Dulles decidedly did not face down communist aggression. The Chinese Communists — not officially recognized by the United States — were admitted as a participant to the Geneva Conference in 1954 (along with the United States, the Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain). This led to their allied agent, Vietnamese communist Ho Chi Minh, winding up with half of Vietnam. *Time* said at the time that at Geneva, the "Communists got precisely what they sought" — in the magazine's words, "a vast slice of Indochina, and a stance from which to take the rest, plus formal recognition of their military conquests and time to do their further will."

Roy Niekerk

Crushing Tibetans, Uyghurs

To Mosher's credit, we get effective, astringent doses in *Bully of Asia* of what occupation is like under the Communist Chinese, especially as experienced by the locals in Tibet and Xinjiang. If readers want to imagine what the world would be like under China's hegemony, comments the author, take a visit to Tibet's capital of Lhasa. The "Chinese party-state's efforts," remarks Mosher,

> since the Tibetan uprising of 2008 to eradicate all opposition within Tibet by means of repressive force have been extraordinarily heavy-handed and, to all appearances, effective. The Tibetans have now been reduced to a dhimmi-like status in their own native land.

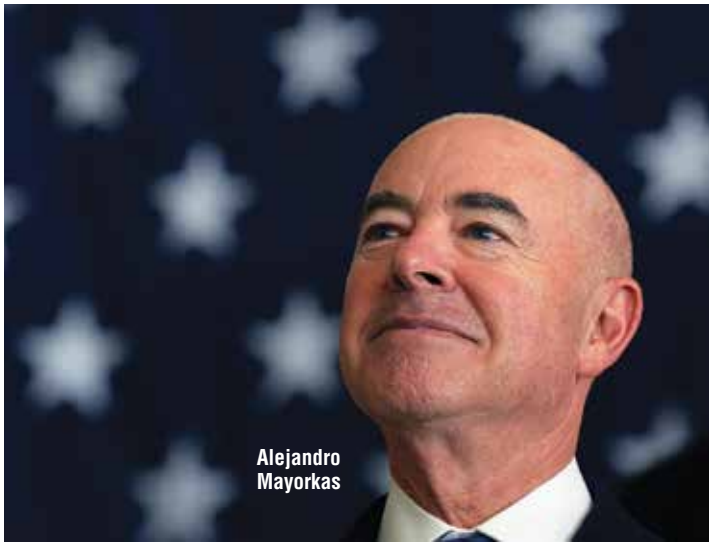
The Chinese communists even boast about this "benevolent rule" in Tibet being an example of the "harmonious world" it foresees when it attains preeminence.

Clearly, China's dream of global rule would be a dreadful nightmare. ■

BY C. MITCHELL SHAW

Biden Administration Creates **Its Own Ministry of Truth**

The recent creation of a "Disinformation Governance Board" has raised more than a few eyebrows. And rightly so: The board is eerily similar to the Ministry of Truth from Orwell's *1984*, and it is the creation of the Department of Homeland Security — a department so *deeply* Deep State that it nearly defines the term.


Alejandro Mayorkas

AP Images

The creation of the board was announced on May 27, when DHS chief Alejandro Mayorkas was answering questions before congressional lawmakers. Invoking the bogeyman of alleged previous "Russian interference" in the 2020 elections, Representative Jim Langevin (D-R.I.) asked the DHS chief what DHS was doing to prevent "misinformation" from skewing the 2022 midterms. Mayorkas answered, "We have just established a disinformation governance board in the Department of Homeland Security to more effectively combat this threat, not only to election security but to our homeland security."

The timing is highly questionable, not only coming as Democrats prepare for what many expect to be a thorough trouncing in the midterms — due largely to voter response to Biden's disastrous policies — but also coinciding with Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter. Musk's promise to transform Twitter into a "free speech" platform where conservatives will no longer be censored has been met on the Left with dire predictions of the "end of democracy." Democrats — it appears — believe "democracy" can only prevail when conservatives are routinely silenced in the public square.

But perhaps even more disturbing than the timing is the choice of who will head the new Ministry of Truth: Nina Jankowicz — a "Russian disinformation" expert who served as a disinformation fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington, D.C. — will serve as the Arbiter of All Truth.

Jankowicz is a demonstrable enemy of free speech, tweeting on April 25 that "free speech absolutists" cause her to "shudder" because unhindered free speech is harmful to "marginalized communities."

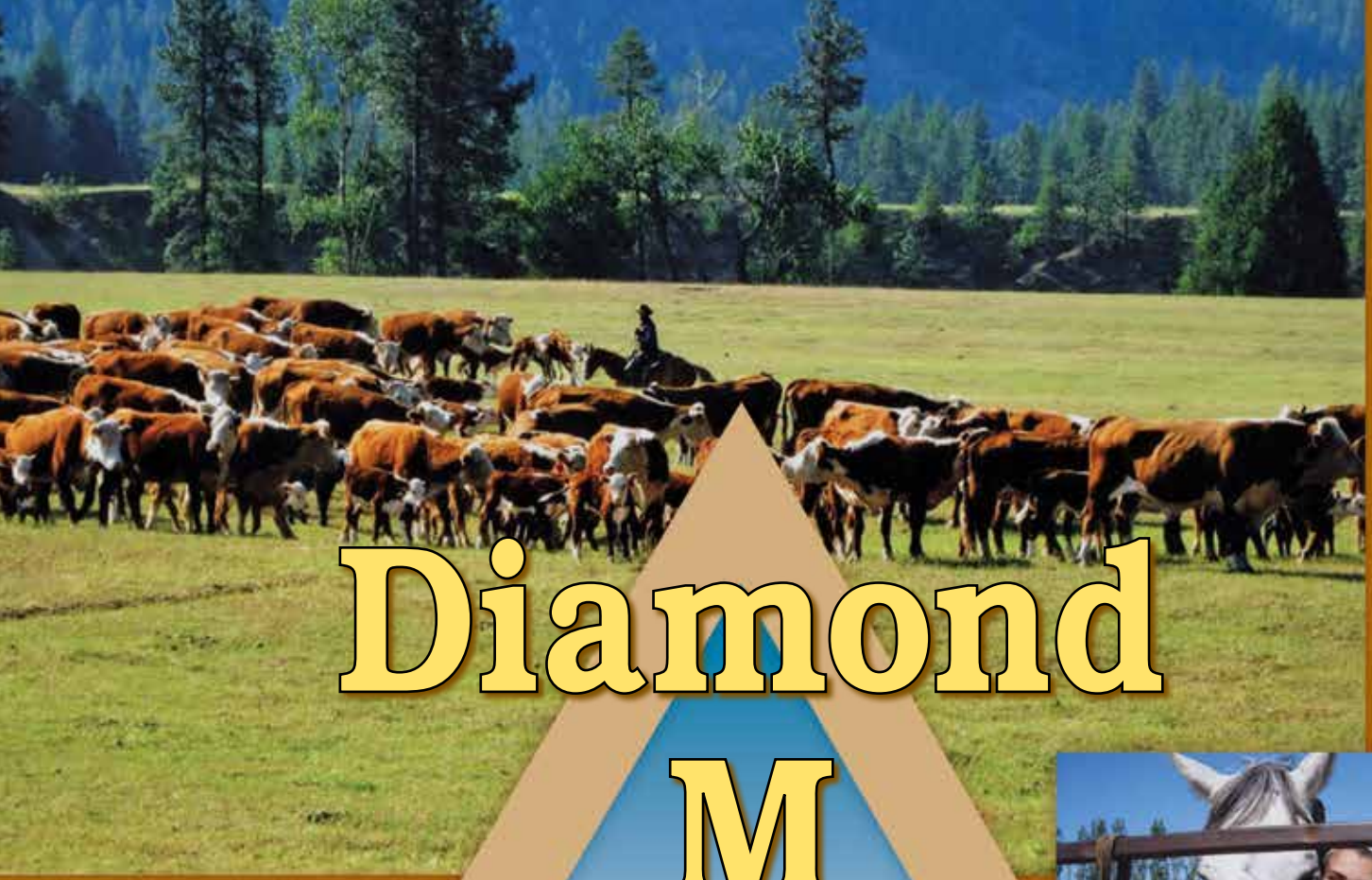
And by couching her disdain for free speech in terms of support for women and other "marginalized communities," Jankowicz muddies the water of logic and reason while ticking off another box beloved by the Left. She is a rabid pro-fill-in-the-blank-of-victimhood, bleeding-heart liberal.

And while one would rightly expect the Arbiter of All Truth to know the difference between truth and lies, Jankowicz is little more than a spewer of the party line. Far from differentiating truth from lies — information from misinformation — she merely regurgitates whatever the Left is saying at any given time. And, as do her fellow liberal partisans, she shifts gears and changes direction with the winds of political expediency. For instance, early on in the Covid drama, she vociferously agreed with the party line that masks were unnecessary, tweeting in March of 2020 that the "adtech industry" should stop "placing ads for masks" on "articles about coronavirus," calling such ads "straight up disinfo!" So, like a good Democrat, Jankowicz was against masks before she was for them.

And during the final presidential debate between Trump and Biden on October 22, 2020, Jankowicz sided with her fellow partisans in criticizing Trump for the Hunter Biden laptop story, tweeting, "Back on the 'laptop from hell,' apparently — Biden notes 50 former natsec officials and 5 former CIA heads that believe the laptop is a Russian influence op."

And while she has subsequently claimed that she was "livetweeting" during the debate and that the tweet was "a direct quote" form the debate and not "a key to all my views," she is simply lying. Because the next morning, she tweeted, "I was thinking of pitching a quick piece about the election security section of the debate, but I realized it can be summed up in a tweet," continuing, "One candidate cogently discussed actual policies for keeping our democracy safe. The other spouted convaluted [sic] conspiracies." She also called the story of Hunter Biden's laptop a "Trump campaign product." Also, the day of the debate, she tweeted that she agreed with doubts about "the provenance of the NY Post's Hunter Biden story." In subsequent tweets months later, she continued to refer to the laptop story as "misleading or unsubstantiated claims" pushed by "the Kremlin."

In the final analysis, the creation of a DHS Disinformation Governance Board — headed by a bleeding-heart liberal, man-hating woman who never met a conservative fact she didn't accuse of being right-wing misinformation and who has herself unapologetically spread misinformation — is a naked attempt on the part of the Biden administration to control the flow of information. And the reason is obvious: It is the only hope Democrats have of avoiding an electoral bloodbath in the midterms. ■



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